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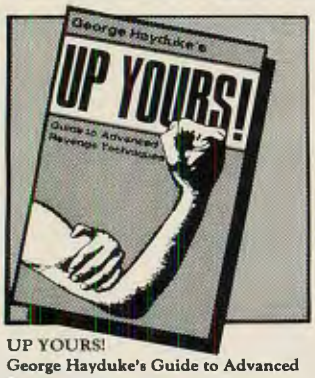

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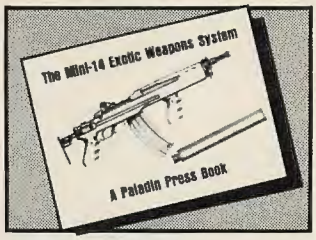

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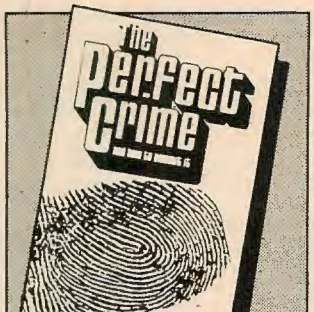

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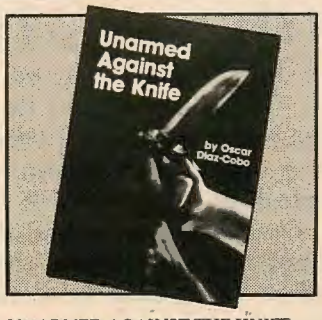

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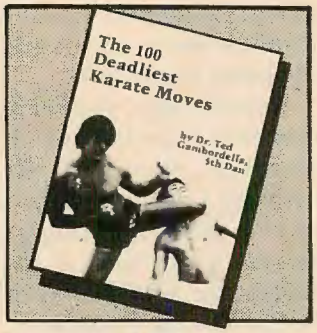

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EDITOR'S NOTE

JUST when it seemed that peace might be within sight in Lebanon, another explosion rocked Beirut and seriously threatened that hope. While meeting with his senior advisers, President-elect Bashir Gemayel was killed when a bomb exploded in the Kataeb Party headquarters in east Beirut. Gemayel was scheduled to be inaugurated 23 September, just one week after his death.

In a land where too many have died from the rounds of war, Gemayel's death may be the one too many that pushes Lebanon over the edge. Lebanon has tottered on the brink of total warfare for the past seven years. What began as a civil conflict between the Moslems and Christians became a fight for national sovereignty when first the armies of the PLO, then of Syria and most recently of Israel entered the conflict. Throughout the long war that has left 100,000 dead and more injured and homeless, many Lebanese have clung to the belief that if all foreign armies were removed, the Lebanese could resolve their internal problems.

Essentially, that was the platform on which Bashir Gemayel campaigned and won the recent presidential election. Although the odds against him succeeding in uniting Lebanon into a militarily strong, independent nation free of foreign occupation and armed militias were long, he embodied the hopes of many Lebanese (both Christian and Moslem) and of Arab and Western leaders for peace in Lebanon.

Gemayel could not have succeeded in the long term — nor can his successor — unless some broad political and social reforms are enacted to reconstruct Lebanon, reforms based on the changes wrought in the country since the adoption in 1943 of the present constitution, which guarantees majority representation to the now-minority Christians.

Whether Gemayel could have succeeded in effecting these sweeping reforms — or even if he genuinely wanted them — will never be known. His primary objectives were to remove the Syrian and Israeli armies, and to disarm the militias (both Christian and Moslem) and return the peacekeeping and police function to the legitimate Lebanese army. Getting the Israelis out before his death would have been difficult; now, a quick withdrawal seems very unlikely. His violent death is perhaps the best evidence of how far the country is from civil stability. It seems that too many have become accustomed to the style of terrorism.

Perhaps in death, Gemayel's influence can accomplish what he hoped to do as president: bring peace and prosperity back to Lebanon. Before his death, Gemayel warned: "If the peace of other countries does not reach Lebanon, the war of Lebanon will engulf them." That warning seems even more pertinent now.

—Donna DuVall

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SOF

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COVER: Israeli limited war: Vigilant Israeli soldier carrying Galil exemplifies battle-tested citizen-warriors who drove PLO from Lebanon. Controversial campaign advanced over civilian lands and towns like WWII *blitzkrieg*, trying – with uneven results – to discriminate between civilian enclaves and military targets. PLO deliberately blurred distinction. Photo: Rick Venable

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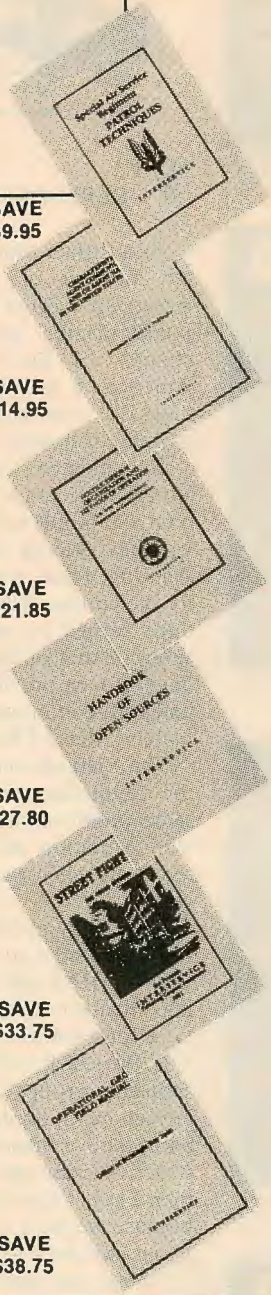

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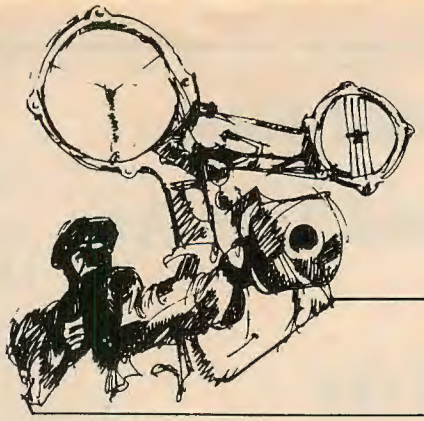

FLAK

VVA RESPONSE ...

Sirs:

As a former Marine, Vietnam vet, charter member of the first Vietnam-era American Legion Post No. 21, and a board member of the Spokane, Wash. chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America, I feel I must respond to the negative comments about the VVA ("Bulletin Board," SOF, July '82).

Our members include both veterans with a wide range of experience in Vietnam and family members of POWs/MIAs who have waited years for information on their loved ones who have been held POW by the communists. A list of commendations earned by our members would fill several issues of SOF. With our blood we have proven our loyalty, love of country and anti-communist fervor that at least matches that of Project Freedom's.

The Vietnam vet is tired of waiting for the resolution of our problems by the same politicians that led us into a "no-win" situation in Vietnam and then deserted us when they started losing a few votes.

If the U.S. government will not look for the answers to problems such as POWs/MIAs and Agent Orange poisoning, then the VVA will go to Hanoi and look for answers.

If Project Freedom and the other "responsible groups" that have not gained any cooperation from the U.S. or Vietnamese governments do not have any constructive criticism for our organization, then I say, "Stay the hell out of our way, because we have no time for people who know only how to hate."

I hope you won't let Project Freedom censor the beautiful blonde ladies of uncertain morals from your coverage of SOF's Third Annual Convention. Your readers appreciate their uncoverage as much as your writers. I think your magazine is the finest of its type on the market. I especially enjoy the articles on military weapons, and I believe you do a fascinating job of presenting the true face of war.

However, I wish you would explain the often shoddy treatment of our country's vets after the fighting has been done.

Richard R. Ross
Spokane, Washington

Our remarks in support of Project Freedom's condemnation of Bobby Muller's trip to Hanoi should not be construed as a condemnation of everyone who is a member of the VVA. We realize that there are a lot of good people in the VVA. Muller and the trip to Hanoi, however, are another matter. We question Muller's politics and purpose and have suspected that the trip was nothing more than a well-orchestrated propaganda exercise staged for the benefit of the North Vietnamese. They went along with the charade as they had to give up little information about POWs in return for an enormous amount of coverage of their war-reparation claims.

It is not a matter of hating the North Vietnamese so much as determining if private approaches like Muller's can result in a good-faith negotiation on the issue with the North Vietnamese. History has shown that the North Vietnamese and their communist brethren in Laos and Cambodia still hate intensely: There are scores of thousands who have disappeared into the Vietnamese Gulag, more who were driven into the South China Sea to drown, millions who were executed in Cambodia and Meos who today are being deliberately exterminated throughout the area.

How do you propose to negotiate in good faith with people like that?

—The Eds.

BOBBY: ANOTHER VIEW ...

Sirs:

SOF was elevated to new plateaux with its article by ex-Green Beret John E. Padgett, who, besides giving a touching tribute to a Viet merc, offers a sincere alternative view of the Nicaraguan revolution. Padgett's theses are these: One, that Somoza's was a "corrupt arbitrary dictatorship" whose idiot barbarity forced many Nicaraguans into the Marxist fold, and two, supporting the regime — as it existed — possibly helped to "prolong the agony and further polarize the people."

Padgett's argument is tenable. Indeed, America must check communist expansion, but with buffoons like Somoza?

Continued on page 122

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Just brew what you need once every month or two and that's it! For as little as 11-12 cents per bottle.

MYTH — "But, large commercial breweries with all their expertise surely produce the best beer in the world."
FACT — That's like saying because cellophane wrapped pie in the supermarket is baked by a national bakery it's got to be better than a homemade apple pie fresh from the oven.

If you use our mini-brewery and follow the instructions carefully, your beer will be better than commercial beer. Because, by law, commercial breweries are allowed to use up to 52 different artificial ingredients... including tannin and enzymes, calcium disodium ethylenediaminetetra-acetate (to prevent gushing), propylege glycol alginate (to stabilize the foam), and three coal tar dyes for artificial coloring.

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MYTH — "Making beer at home is illegal..."

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COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

IPSC Reloading Tips

by Ken Hackathorn

BLOWN barrels, jams, stovepipes and recycling failures ruin more IPSC scores than anything else. These may seem like mechanical failures of the pistol but, generally, they're not. Most of these failures usually come from improperly reloaded ammo.

Yeah, we've all got to cut corners. If you're an international competitor and are shooting 200 to 400 rounds a day, commercial prices of .45 ACP ball can break you. Reloading is one way to beat cartridge inflation, but remember: Choose the right bullet, carefully determine and measure the proper powder charge, use a taper crimp — and watch your measurements.

The Browning patent makes guns that can be picky about their food. Accordingly, classic round-noses feed best, and should be used by most reloaders. The Lyman 452374 at 225 grains and the 230-grain H&G 34 are just about perfect if you're buying bullets. Either bullet will perform reliably with 4.6 grains of Bullseye, 5.4 of WW231 or 6.7 grains of Unique.

Many IPSC shooters favor semi-wadcutter bullets. These are just fine for competition, and are my favorites, but be sure the bullet has a good long nose or you'll have feed problems. The H&G 68, RCBS 201 Kt. and the Saeco 68 are very close in form and function. Load any of these 200-grain SWCs with 5.0 of Bullseye, 5.8 of WW231 or 7.0 of Unique.

If you think your ammo is going to be checked by match officials, increase these loads by 10 percent.

A taper crimp takes one more step and one more piece of equipment, but the firm hold the taper gives on a bullet is worth the cost and trouble. A good taper crimp will keep the bullet in place, but its effectiveness varies with the thickness and malleability of your brass cases. GI cases are uniform and strong and they please me most, but Federal and Winchester-Western cases are nearly as good. You should probably avoid R-P headstamp Remington cases, but the only reason I say that is because I have trouble with them. Remember, too, that reloading is easier and results are more uniform with clean brass. Use a tumbler.

Hard-alloy-cast bullets, properly seated, make good IPSC .45 ammo. Photo: John Metzger

Pay careful attention to all measurements — especially with SWC cartridges. The previously mentioned bullets should be seated with one-thirty-second to one-sixteenth of the shoulder protruding from the case. By the time you're done, the rounds should seat fully in a clean chamber from their own weight and should drop free when the barrel is up-ended. When you start a new run, load 50 rounds and test-fire them. If they pass, load the rest of your cases.

If you load fast, load when you're tired or have unreasoning trust in your equipment, buy a spare barrel. Primer failures don't do a whole lot, since they usually can't start the bullet out of the case, but they do ruin scores. On the other hand, a partial load will put the bullet partway down the barrel. The following bullet will usually blow the first bullet out, and deform or burst the barrel. The double-charged case will most often blow out the base of the brass, wrecking stocks and magazine, and your hands may hurt for some time afterward (as a useful reminder).

Unless you're independently wealthy, you need to reload. Just be careful.

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IN REVIEW

SKORZENY: HITLER'S COMMANDO. By Glenn B. Infield. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1981. 226 pp. $10.95. Review by William M. Brooks.

GLENN B. Infield's biography is the fifth book to cover the life of the daring and controversial commando, Otto Skorzeny. Two previous biographies, one by Charles Foley, *Commando Extraordinary,* Ballantine, 1955, and Charles Whiting's *Skorzeny,* Ballantine, 1972, were general accounts of Skorzeny's wartime exploits. Two autobiographies, *Skorzeny's Special Missions,* London, 1957, and *La Guerre Inconnue,* Paris, 1975, were attempts by Skorzeny to give his own detailed accounts of his career and to deny allegations about many postwar intrigues.

From 1943 until his death in 1975, Otto Skorzeny's exploits, first as chief of the Waffen-SS *Jagdverbaenden* (Commandos) and later as head of the postwar ODESSA (Organization for the Release of Former SS Members), became synonymous with adventure and courage. Otto Skorzeny was a formidable and complex man, tall, muscular, saber-scarred, and fanatically loyal to those whom he served.

Mein Ehre Heisst Treue (My Honor Is My Loyalty) was the motto of the Waffen-SS. Members of this elite unit did not take this statement lightly. Skorzeny lived and breathed this sacred oath, ultimately upholding it to his death.

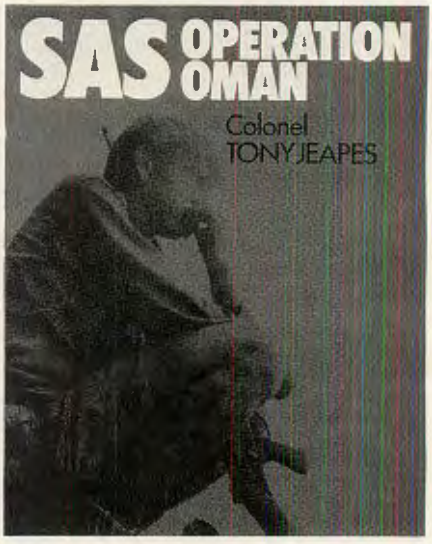
Skorzeny's wartime exploits have been well-documented, but his life after his escape to Spain, where he established a lucrative engineering firm and became the focus of many Cold War intrigues, has never before been covered in a book about Skorzeny in the English language. Glenn B. Infield insists that Skorzeny worked for the CIA and became a key figure in a conspiracy of silence between the United States and former Nazi intelligence leaders. He declares that Skorzeny also fell heir to the secrets of "Nazi treasure" — money smuggled out of Germany during WWII — and used it to protect former confederates and to become the leading figure in ODESSA and *Die Spinne* (The Spider), a system of safe houses and sanctuaries on the Nazi escape route to South America. Infield also contends that Skorzeny possessed letters from Churchill to Mussolini which he used as blackmail in order to obtain the release of many Nazis imprisoned by the British.

Skorzeny went to Egypt as a military adviser and organized a staff of former German officers to train the Egyptian army. He trained the first units of the PLO, the IRA and the OAS. He retaliated against Jewish Nazi hunters and was not beyond eliminating his own people if they became a liability to ODESSA. Skorzeny died of cancer on 7 July 1975. He was cremated and his ashes were buried in his native Vienna.

Skorzeny never betrayed his principles: loyalty to those with whom he served, secrecy of action and silence. At the international military tribunal after WWII he never testified against any associate. He never stated, as many German officers did, that he had opposed Hitler and had only been following orders. He never curried favor in order to brighten his image in the postwar world. Skorzeny said he was proud to serve his country, did his best to win, fought to the last breath as well as he knew how — and didn't give a damn who knew it.

Glenn Infield's book is not the final word on Otto Skorzeny's activities. He fails to mention Skorzeny's autobiography, *La Guerre Inconnue,* in his bibliography and makes no mention of Skorzeny's list of law suits and proven fabrications concerning his postwar escapades. The reader must also brush aside some absurd statements (in chapter 18) and the author's belief that all the terrorism in today's world is the result of Adolf Hitler and Otto Skorzeny. The book's 19 photographs are horrible and badly reproduced.

Although **Skorzeny: Hitler's Commando** makes interesting reading, there is still a need for a more detailed account of Otto Skorzeny's life. I hope this definitive biography will be published soon.



SAS, OPERATION OMAN. By Col. Tony Jeapes. The Battery Press, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3107, Uptown Station, Nashville, TN 37219. 1982. 247 pp. Illustrated. $17.95. Review by Madro Bandaries.

TONY Jeapes first saw action in Oman in 1971 and returned there in 1974 as Special Air Service regimental commander. This well-written book gives an insider's view of how the SAS functions. Readers familiar with Special Forces' hearts and minds programs will see much similarity with SAS work. Detailing day-to-day actions, it recounts the boring but necessary work of aiding the local government in its management as well as the recruitment of local tribesmen.

SAS, Operation Oman should be required reading for our national political leaders since it details the destruction and defeat of a communist-inspired revolution. For those interested in recent military history, it offers a model campaign for keeping small wars small.

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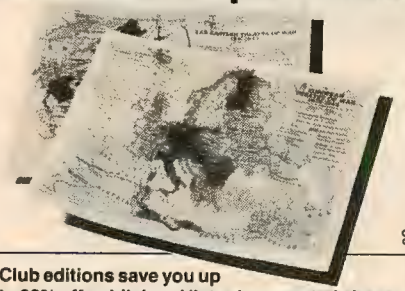

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IT HAPPENED TO ME

DEEP SLEEP: ARVN WAKEUP CALL

by Jimmy Emory as told to M.L. Jones

In October 1966 Jimmy Emory's platoon of Marines from "K" Co. 3/5 was maintaining security in a hamlet inland from Chu Lai with a detachment of Army of the Republic of Vietnam troops. As he tells it:

THE name of the hamlet I never knew, but then I was a mere lance corporal and nobody felt it was necessary to tell me. Frankly, that's about the way my whole Vietnam tour went — I didn't know where I was most of the time. We were either on this hill, in that valley, the jungle over there or two ridge lines over, never really knowing our actual geographic location.

Anyhow, during this period spent with the ARVN troops the word was out to watch yourself if you pulled guard with one of them. They were notorious for either going to sleep on watch, leaving the hole unprotected (with you sleeping), or else just walking off and leaving the foxhole or bunker altogether.

Word got around about this, and eventually the ARVN unit commander got wind of it. Capt. Moto (I believe he was called), the ARVN unit commander, supposedly had been an officer in the North Vietnamese Army, and then switched sides. The word was that he was high on the NVA most-wanted list.

He apparently was very serious about any infraction shown by his troops, and he wanted to know if any Marine caught his ARVN counterpart sleeping on duty. One early morning while he was checking the lines he came upon a foxhole with two Marines and one ARVN troop sleeping inside. Capt. Moto woke up the two Marines and without asking any questions to confirm who was supposed to be on watch, he motioned for them to get out of the hole. They had no more cleared it when Capt. Moto pulled a pin on a grenade and threw it in the hole with the ARVN. After the explosion, he walked away unconcerned as the two Marines stood there in disbelief as to what they had just seen. It was never proven who actually was on watch. However, after observing the penalty for sleeping on duty, you better believe those two Marines never admitted it was them.

Needless to say, the word got around rapidly and for the rest of our stay in this hamlet we had very few problems with the ARVNs (or anybody else for that matter) sleeping while on guard.

IF you have a personal adventure for "It Happened to Me" or "I Was There," triple-space type it and send it to SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: M.L. Jones. All stories should be 500 words or less. Upon publication, SOF will become owner of all publication rights. Submitted articles are subject to editing and revision, although their content and theme will not be changed.

Photos (with captions and credits) are also helpful. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet of paper and keyed to each photograph.

Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can notify you of acceptance or return your story. Article payment is $50, upon publication. All entrants will receive an SOF patch.

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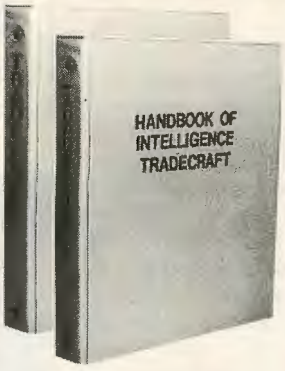

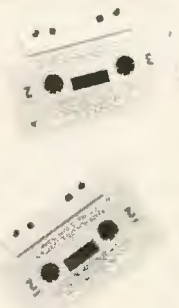

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BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos

CUBAN ARMS BUILD-UP . . .

Since 1981 Soviet weaponry has been flowing into the communist island of Cuba at an alarming rate, approaching levels not seen since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez told the United Nations General Assembly that Cuba had "almost doubled" its military capability in the past year with "huge amounts of modern and sophisticated weapons." When asked why , Rodriguez admitted that the build-up contrasted with Havana's worldwide call for a reduction in armaments. He declared that Cuba was forced to build up defenses because of successive attacks by U.S. administrations. Rodriguez conveniently avoided mentioning the supplier, and what specific weapons were provided.

According to U.S. intelligence, Soviet-supplied equipment to Cuba includes assault helicopters (Mi8s and Mi24s), MiG 21 and MiG 23 jet fighters, transport planes, frigates, patrol boats, minesweepers, missile launchers, tanks, small arms and ammunition.

Rodriguez angrily denounced the United States and claimed that U.S. support of Britain in the Falklands war and support of the Israeli invasion into Lebanon demonstrated that it was practical for small nations to arm, and larger, more powerful nations to disarm.

Along with the weapons build-up, Cuba has added 500,000 men and women to its part-time territorial militia.

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE BEWARE . . .

The South African Defense Force is no longer accepting foreign volunteers, and any foreigner now serving with the South African Defense Forces will not be allowed to reenlist unless he applies for South African citizenship. The reason behind this is South African displeasure over a series of derogatory articles written by foreign correspondents and some foreign members of the now disbanded 44 Para Battalion. The derogatory articles played right into the hands of SWAPO, whose propaganda has always contended that the South African Army is composed of bloodthirsty, racist mercenaries.

PLO: ARMS AND THE MEN . . .

One man's mercenary is another man's freedom fighter. There are many foreign volunteers fighting with the PLO, and — though most are from Moslem countries — some are Westerners.

Soldier of Fortune **gets you closer: Soviet Mi-8 helicopter sweeps low through valley near Kabul searching for Afghan freedom fighters. The Russians failed to spot SOF contributor Mark Warman and his escort party but Warman caught them in the viewfinder of his camera. See Warman's article, "Kabul's Urban Guerrillas," SOF, November '82. Photo: Mark Warman © 1982**

SOF hangs out in the right places. Attending the King of Thailand's garden party are (left to right): SOF Foreign Correspondent Jim Coyne, Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown, Maj. Gen. Pichitr Kullavanijaya (Commanding General, 1st Division, "The King's Guard," Royal Thai Army), and Tony Paul (roving correspondent for *Reader's Digest*, Asia). Staffers and dignitaries discussed Southeast Asia's problems, such as MIA/POW issue and Soviet-sponsored use of chemical/biological warfare. The posh occasion celebrated Thailand's bicentennial, 6 May 1982.

It is known that at least one American is fighting with the PLO. Calvin Raphael Holt, of Washington, D.C., converted to Islam about 10 years ago. A 25-year-old black who claims to be a Vietnam-era vet, Holt has been wearing his army fatigues and helmet, carrying an M16. He claims to have fought alongside Moslem rebels in Afghanistan, and is now waiting to die for Allah for the liberation of Palestine. When a *Washington Post* correspondent asked Holt if he helped train PLO guerrillas, he replied, "When advice is needed, I give it. When it's not, I'm a sniper." He claims to have killed at least nine Israeli soldiers with his scoped M16.

Only a handful of Westerners are fighting with the PLO. One Canadian was captured, and sightings of Irish Republican Army terrorists have been claimed by some journalists.

As of September, Israel has captured over 6,000 prisoners, and the official Israeli response is that they are not sure what to do with them all. Twenty-five percent are not Palestinians. PLO guerrillas from the following countries have been captured: Bangladesh, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Tunisia, Libya, Somalia, Algeria, Yemen, Niger, Nigeria, Ceylon, India, Canada, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Mali, Sudan, Mauritania, Morocco, Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt and Abu Dhabi. Foreign prisoners are interrogated, but treated no differently than Palestinians.

Huge amounts of small arms have been captured, most of Soviet origin. Even before the Israelis pulled into Beirut, weapons and ammunition were found in storage caches — including 700 brand-new M16s still in their packing crates. Their markings showed that the rifles had originally been shipped to Saudi Arabia. It is not known if the Saudis handed over the M16s to the PLO on their own accord. The latest-issue German G-3s were numerous, most still in their packing crates also. As of September 1982, over 35,000 rifles have been captured, half of them AK-47s. The variety of small arms is staggering: almost every modern military rifle, machine gun and submachine gun made, plus a collection of antique sporting arms and over 4,000 12-gauge shotguns. Heavy stuff was quite prevalent too, with Soviet Katyusha rockets, U.S.-made recoilless rifles, artillery and mines; not to mention over 50 Russian T-34 tanks, over 70 T-55s and 10 T-72s, as well as a large assortment of armored personnel carriers — many with huge holes punched in them from Israel's new 105mm antitank gun.

Israel is not sure of all the suppliers for PLO arms. Most likely, many were provided by sympathetic nations or arms brokers, and the various Moslem groups from other countries, including rumored terrorist groups involved helping the PLO, brought along the weapons they were trained with.

HOLIDAY INNS VS. CBS ...

Holiday Inns, which helped sponsor an inaccurate CBS documentary called "People Like Us" with Bill Moyers, is refusing to pay CBS for the commercial. Holiday Inns was led to believe that Bill Moyers' program, aired 21 April 1982, was to be a balanced report on the Reagan administration's budget policies. Instead, according to Bill D. Goforth, Vice President for Communication of Holiday Inns, the program was "biased and narrow, one-sided, not news — but propaganda." Goforth added: "Because we were misled about the program's content, we have informed CBS that we will not pay for the Holiday Inn commercial aired during the "People Like Us" program. We are also making it known to CBS that if they are willing to run an 'equal time' response to the program, we will reverse this decision."

SOF commends Goforth and Holiday Inns for their dignified display of conscience in the often unconscionable world of television news.

VIETNAM ART EXHIBIT ...

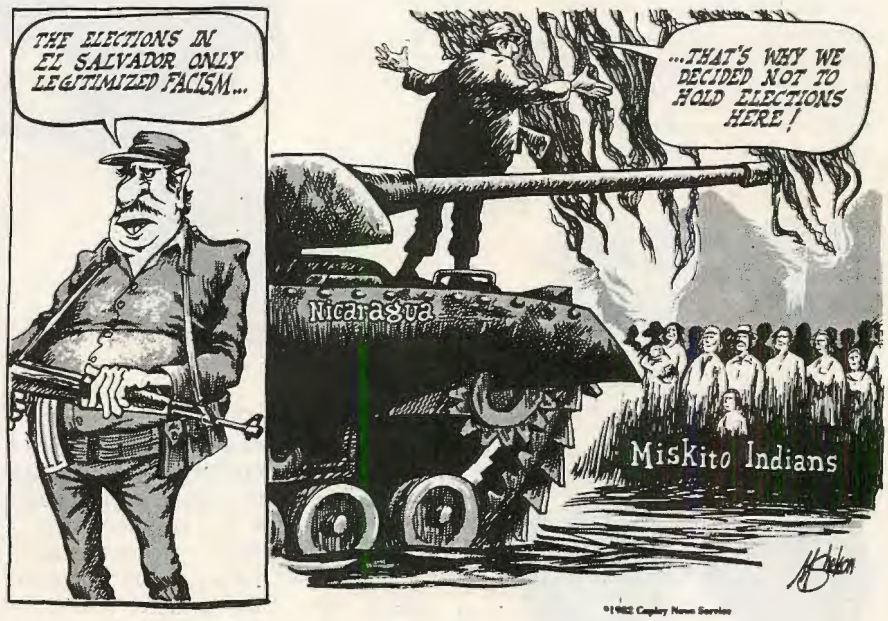
The Vietnam Era Veterans Association of New Jersey is sponsoring a Vietnam art exhibit to be held 11 November to 12 December 1982 at the Newark Museum in Newark, NJ. The event will be in conjunction with the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Douglas Hirsch of the museum explained that the theme of the exhibit will be the veteran's transition from war to home. Through the eyes of the veteran — not the news media — the exhibit will offer a new perspective on the longest war in U.S. history. For some examples of Vietnam veterans' art, see "The Vietnam Experience Through Art," SOF, July '81.

FRENCH CIA GETS THE AXE ...

The new socialist government in Paris has about had it with the French intelligence community's African operations. President Francois Mitterrand, in an effort to improve relations with Third World countries, has pounced on the Documentation and Counter-Espionage Service (SDECE) with the recent discovery of a major intelligence "conspiracy" which supposedly tried to draw France into full-scale war with Libya.

For the last 20 years, the SDECE has been reporting to French heads of state on African policy and affairs. Jacques Foccart, personal adviser on African affairs to Charles de Gaulle and George Pompidou, laid out the groundwork for SDECE-sponsored French mercenaries to make and break various African governments over the years.

Some operations worked, some didn't. Some were pulled off with surprising ease — such as the overthrow of the Comoro Islands' government by French mercs led by Col. Bob Denard in 1976 to replace the anti-French president with a friendly one. Up front it looked like a typical merc operation: swift and successful. But Denard and his men arrived at the Comoros on a French ship, and were



Continued on page 120

ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

by John Metzger

STEYR FIREPOWER ...

Steyr-Mannlicher has come out with a new pistol in 9mm Parabellum called the GB. The most striking feature about this gas-delayed blow-back-action pistol is its capacity: an 18-round staggered magazine plus one round in the chamber. Also, when fired, the gun is double-action for the first shot, and single-action for remaining shots.

Front sight is a post with luminous point, and rear is a rectangular notch with two luminous points. With an overall length of 8½ inches, the gun weighs in empty at 39 ounces. The 5¼-inch, cold-hammered, chrome-bore barrel is fixed to the frame, eliminating shot-to-shot barrel-positioning variation. The GB can be disassembled in seconds — without depressing the mainspring — by using a special takedown lever. The factory claims an approximate muzzle velocity of 1,200 feet per second using Hirtenberg ammunition. Also featured is an integral automatic drop safety and firing pin lock.

The gun will retail in the United States for $476. Steyr offers a line of holsters for the GB as well. For more information, contact *Steyr Daimler Puch of America Corporation,* Dept. SOF, 85 Metro Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094. Phone: (800) 526-7180.

BOLT-ACTION BLADE ...

Designed in collaboration with noted knife craftsman Blackie Collins, *Gerber Legendary Blades* has introduced the Gerber Bolt-Action: "An incredibly reliable blade locking system," according to company president Pete Gerber. "The knife is designed for one-hand use in a survival situation, where only one hand is free."

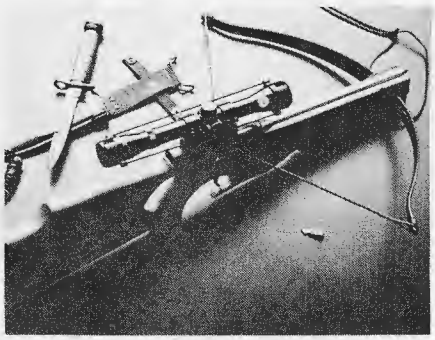
The folding blade is locked open by a bolt which wedges firmly between the end of the tang and the inside of the handle, resulting in a very positive, strong-locking mechanism. The locked blade is released by sliding a spring-loaded thumb-tab on the side of the handle.

Handles are heat-molded Rynite, a space-age material that is impervious to chipping or cracking — "an extremely lightweight and tough substance," explained Gerber, "ideal for a knife handle. This new model is as tough as any knife on the market but weighs only three ounces."

The drop-point blade is 3¼ inches long and is manufactured from 441 series surgical stainless steel. Overall length of the knife is 7½ inches. With nylon belt scabbard, the knife is reasonably priced at around $30. A specially designed leather scabbard is also available.

For more information on the Bolt-Action, contact *Gerber Legendary Blades*, Dept. SOF, 14200 S.W. 72nd Ave, Portland, OR 97223. Phone: (503) 639-6161.

MORE ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER



VERSATILE CROSSBOW ...

The Horton Safari Magnum crossbow, imported by *Precision Sports, Inc.*, is now available in a 150-pound version. Previously, only a 125-pound version was available. Both the 125- and 150-pound prods (bows) are manufactured of profiled-steel in a semi-frictionless design and are completely interchangeable on the Safari Magnum stock. All Horton Safari Magnum crossbows carry a lifetime operational warranty. Each stock is made from preloaded, structural glass-filled polypropylene — virtually indestructible. The hardened steel trigger has a crisp letoff and automatic safety. Horton's exclusive "Dial-A-Range" sighting system allows instant, silent sight adjustment for range changes. Each crossbow comes complete with a rope stirrup cocking aid and two aluminum bolts. Total weight is four pounds, three ounces.

Suggested retail prices are: $229.95 for the 125-pound crossbow set, $49 for 125-pound spare prod with string; $239.95 for the 150-pound crossbow set, and $59 for the 150-pound spare prod with string.

For more literature and information, readers should send $1 to *Precision Sports, Inc.*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 219, Ithaca, NY 14850.

BLAST AND FLASH ...

Accuracy Systems, Inc. is now shipping their new Model 429 STUN Grenade. "This unique device is designed especially for use in hostage/terrorist or riot-control situations," says Chuck Byers, president of *Accuracy Systems*, "when a violent blast and flash are required to stun or scare the perpetrators with less chance of injury than from a conventional hand grenade."

The special loading of Magdex Hi Flash composition, manufactured by *Accuracy Systems*, provides both an extremely loud report and a bright flash, while the special soft-plastic grenade body and submunition container greatly reduce the possibility of injuries from flying fragments of the grenade shell.

When the pin is pulled and the safety lever released, the fuse will function in approximately 1½ seconds. The soft-plastic submunition container will then be ejected from the grenade body and explode in a fraction of a second.

The grenades can be purchased (by law-enforcement officers only) in cases of 24, for $840 per case, plus shipping. For more information, contact *Accuracy Systems*, Dept. SOF, 2105 S. Hardy Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282. Phone (602) 966-3086.

COLT M1911/A1 .45 AUTO

1.	Barrel New Colt Mfg.	$45.00
3.	Bushing, barrel	8.00
4.	Bushing, stock screw	.75
5.	Cap, Mainspring	.75
6.	Catch, Magazine	4.00
7.	Disconnector	4.00
8.	Fiector	4.00
9.	Extractor	11.00
10.	Guide, recoil spring	7.25
11.	Hammer	12.50
12.	Hammer Wide Spur	14.50
13.	Housing, mainspring (arched)	12.00
14.	Housing, mainspring flat	14.00
15.	Link, Barrel	1.50
16.	Lock, mag. catch	1.00
17.	Lock, safety (thumb)	10.00
18.	Magazine, New G.I.	6.95
19.	Mainspring	1.00
20.	Pin, barrel, link	.75
20A.	Pin, retainer lanyard loop	.50
21.	Pin, ejector	.75
22.	Pin, firing	2.25
23.	Pin, hammer	.75
24.	Pin, hammer strut	.75
25.	Pin, mainspring cap	.75
26.	Pin, mainspring housing	.75
27.	Pin, sear	.75
28.	Plug, recoil spring	2.00
29.	Plunger, safety lock	1.00
30.	Plunger, slide stop	1.00
31.	Retainer, housing pin	.75
32.	Safety grip (long tang)	10.00
34.	Screw, grip	.75
35.	Sear	6.00
36.	Sight, front	2.00
37.	Sight, rear	2.50
39.	Spring, firing pin	.90
40.	Spring, mag. catch	.75
41.	Spring, Plunger	.75
42	Spring, recoil	1.00
43	Spring, sear	1.85
44.	Stocks (grips), wood	11.00
45.	Stocks (grips), plastic	4.00
46.	Stocks (grips) wood diamond design	13.00
46A.	Stocks (grips), wood target	19.95
47.	Stop, firing pin	2.25
48.	Stop, slide	15.00
49.	Strut, hammer	1.50
50.	Trigger	16.65
51	Trigger, long w/stop Nat'l Match	8.95
52.	Tube, plunger (slide, stop & safety)	4.50

Colt .45 Auto Accessories

53.	Holster, Hip, New, G.I.	19.95
53B.	Holster, shoulder M3 (new) GI Tan	15.95
53C.	Holster, shoulder M7, new GI BLACK	19.95
54	Screwdriver, 45 Auto., 10 for	2.00
57.	Mag. pouch set incl. 2 mags, & pouch Canvas	13.95
64.	Brass bore brush	2/2.00
65.	Bristle bore brush M6 w/wire handle	2/2.50
66.	Technical Manual	5.00

M1 Garand Accessories

60.	Brush, cleaning brass .30 cal. 5 for	2.00
61.	Oil and thong set, plastic	3.00
62.	Oil and thong set, metal	5.00
63.	Eight round clips, 3 for	2.00
66.	Sling, web G.I. used	1.00
69.	Combination tool w/chamber cleaning brush	6.00
70.	Combination tool w/o chamber cleaning brush	3.00
71A.	Blank firing device, orig. G.I.	9.95
72.	Bore cleaner G.I. 2 oz. cans, 3 each	1.00
74.	Cleaning rod 5 piece w/combo tool in handle, new type M-10	5.00
75.	Winter trigger assembly	5.00
77.	Technical manual	4.00
80.	Ruptured cartridge extractor	3.00

BAYONETS

M4 CARBINE BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard

U.S. Caliber .30 M1 Carbine. Blade length: 6½". Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.

SI-8 **$19.95**

GARAND M5A1 BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard

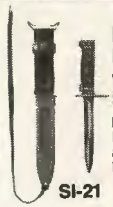
U.S. Caliber .30 M1 Garand Rifle. Blade lenth: 6½". Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.

SI-9 **$20.95**

COLT AR-15/M16 M-7 BAYONET* with M8A1 Scabbard

Blade length: 6". Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.

SI-10 **$19.95**

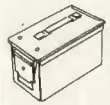


M14/M1A M-6 BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard

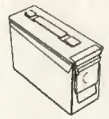
Blade length: 6½". Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle and tie-thongs.

SI-21 **$20.95**

BRAND NEW G.I. AMMUNITION CANS



50 Caliber (M2A1) cans **$9.00 ea.** Special case offer of 12 cans (weight 70 lbs) **$85.00 per case.**



30 Caliber (7.62 NATO) cans **$6.95 ea.** Special case offer of 16 cans (weight 64 lbs) **$74.00 per case**

Note: Individual cans purchased add $3.00 per unit for shipping and handling. CASE LOTS SHIPPED FREIGHT COLLECT.

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2.	Band assembly front w/bayonet lug	10.00
4.	Bolt, Complete, M1	20.00
4A.	Bolt, Stripped, M1	17.50
6.	Catch, magazine, M1	2.50
7.	Catch, magazine, M2	4.00
8.	Ejector assembly w/spring	2.50
9.	Escutcheon recoil plate screw	1.50
10.	Extractor	4.00
11.	Guide operating slide spring	5.00
12.	Hand guard, (wood), new	7.50
12A.	Hand guard, (wood), used	5.00
13.	Hand guard (metal ventilated)	5.00
14.	Hammer	5.00
15.	Housing, Trigger, M1, Stripped	25.00
16.	Key, front sight	2.00
17.	Magazine 15 round	3.00
18.	Magazine, 30 round	4.00
19.	Magazine, 5 round	3.00
20.	Nut, Gas Piston	2.50
21.	Pin, firing	4.00
22.	Pin, front sight	1.00
23.	Pin, hammer	1.50
25.	Pin, trigger housing	1.50
26.	Pin, trigger	1.50
27.	Piston, gas	4.00
28.	Plate, butt	4.00
29.	Plate, recoil	5.00
30.	Plunger extractor w/spring	2.25
31.	Plunger, hammer spring	2.25
32.	Plunger, magazine catch w/spring	2.25
33.	Plunger, safety w/spring	2.25
34.	Safety, flip type	3.50
35.	Safety, button type	3.00
36.	Screw, butt plate	.50
37.	Screw, recoil plate	2.00
38.	Sear	4.00
39.	Sight, front	5.00
40.	Sight, rear adjustable, com'l.	7.50
41.	Sight, rear adjustable, G.I.	12.00
42A.	Slide operating M-1	25.00
43.	Spring, band retaining	2.00
44.	Spring operating slide	2.50
45.	Spring, operating slidestop	1.00
46.	Spring, sear	1.50
47.	Spring, trigger	1.50
47A.	Spring, hammer	1.50
49.	Stock, used, excellent, walnut	19.95
49A.	Stock, used good	15.00
49B.	Stock M2, used good	17.95
49C.	Stock M2, used excellent	23.95
50.	Stop, operating slide	2.50
51.	Trigger	5.00

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52.	Brush .30 cal. brass cleaning	5/2.00
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55B.	Sling, Used	1.25
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58.	Pouch, magazine, 5 round, holds four mags.	1.50
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60.	Bore cleaner G.I., 3.2 oz. cans	1.00
62.	Carrying case w/zipper com'l. heavy duty	8.95
65.	Piston nut wrench	2.00
66.	Folding stock commercial	69.95
67.	Stripper clips	5/2.50
69.	Magazine dust covers, rubber	5/1.00
70.	Flash Hider	13.00
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74.	Scope mount (without rings)	13.00
74A.	Scope mount with 1" rings	18.95
75.	Technical manual	5.00
76.	M1 Bolt Disassembly Tool	$11.50
77.	Bayonet M4 & Scab. New Mfg.	19.95

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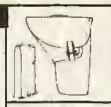

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Heavy-duty canvas. Metal interior pocket for magazine. $9.95 Holster and magazine. New cond. **$24.95**

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Latest issue Nylon LC-1

New Case ..... **$ 5.95**
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New Bipod & Case (Set) . **$15.95**
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30 ROUND MAGAZINES FOR THE RUGER* MINI-14

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COLT MFG. M16/A1 UPPER RECEIVER

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With International Orange inside liner intermediate weight MA-1 NYLON shell steel zipper front KNIT collar, cuffs, waistband 100% poly Reversible XS. S. M. L Brand New Specify size

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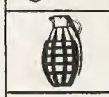

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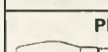

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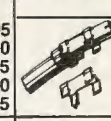


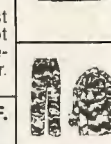
.30 CAL. M-1 CARBINE 60 RD. MAG. ASSEMBLY

Contains 2 30-round magazines and clip holder. **$10.95.** Clip holder only **$3.95.** Mags only **$4.00** each.

ORIGINAL G.I. CAMOUFLAGE M-65 FIELD JACKET

In O.D., Camo. Woodland, or Tan Nylon/cotton con. and Quarpel Water Repellant. Hideaway zipper and hood included. Available in S, M, L or XL sizes. (Specify size) **$54.95,** 2 for **$99.95**

Original G.I. 100% Nylon & Poly. Cold Weather liners for above **$19.95.** 2 for **$35.95**



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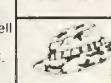

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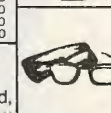

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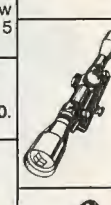

COLT AR-15 HUNTING OUTFIT

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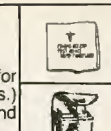
Comes with; belt clip, 3 lenses, extra bulb, O.D. color. & water tight. **$4.95.** 6 for **$24.00** 12 for **$45.00.**



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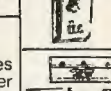
FSN 6545-965-2394 1st aid dressing, bandages, adhesive tape, aspirin, antiseptic ointment, burn cream, etc. Brand new **$4.50**

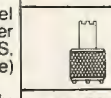


NEW G.I. 30-SHOT CARBINE MAGAZINE POUCH **$4.95**

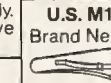
With 4 Mags. **$19.95**

M16/A1 MAINTENANCE KIT **$10.95**

Includes Case, Tooth Brush, LSA, Bore Cleaner, Cleaning Rod, & 2 Chamber Brushes.



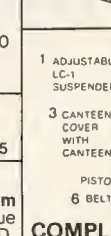
AR-15/M16 FRONT & REAR SIGHT ADJUSTING TOOL **$9.95**



U.S. M1 CARBINE CARRYING CASE

Brand New, Very Rare — complete with carrying strap.

$12.95 2 for **$24.00**



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1 ADJUSTABLE LC-1 SUSPENDERS
2 FIRST AID DRESSING COMPASS CASE
3 CANTEEN COVER WITH CANTEEN
4 INTRENCHING TOOL CARRIER
5 M-16 30 ROUND MAGAZINE POUCH
6 BELT
PISTOL

COMPLETE LC-1 NYLON VIETNAM COMBAT HARNESS ASSEMBLY

1. Adjust Suspenders,* Nylon	$12.95
2. First Aid Dressing Case*	$ 3.00
3. Plastic canteen & cover*	$ 8.50
4. Intrenching Tool Carrier.* Neoprene	$ 4.50
5. 2 M-16 30-Rnd. Mag. Pouches*	$13.90
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*Each item can be ordered individually. Purchase complete LC-1 Outfit and save over **$10.00** ..... only **$42.80**

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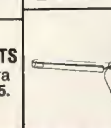
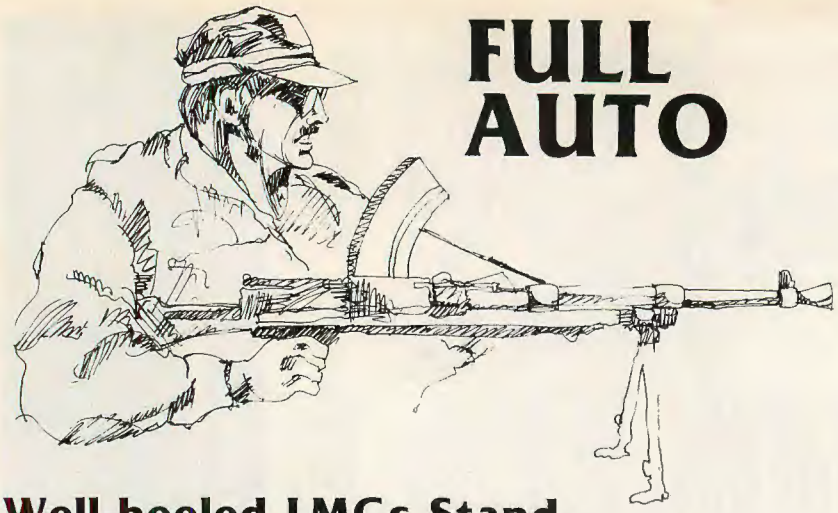


BRAND NEW 45 AUTO SHOULDER HOLSTER

Orig. G.I. issue **$19.95.**
2 for **$35.95**
Specify Color Tan or Black



FULL AUTO

Well-heeled LMGs Stand On Their Own Two Feet

by Peter G. Kokalis

Johnson M1941 LMG (foreground), bipod just in front of forearm; Bren Mk I (center), bipod behind gas regulator and at best compromise position; BAR (rear) with bipod out at muzzle (author's collection). Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

BIPODS on semiautomatic assault rifles provide convenient, stable firing platforms, but they are not entirely essential and thus the weight increase (commonly as much as 2½ pounds) is often not justified for military field use. Bipods are, however, mandatory components of any light-machine-gun system and their location on the weapon involves several important trade-offs.

All the projectiles in a burst of automatic fire do not follow the same trajectory. Ammunition variations, atmospheric conditions, and vibrations of the gun and bipod, all combine to cause the path of flight of each projectile to differ from the others in that burst. This dispersion of trajectories in a single burst is called the "burst group" or "cone of fire."

As this cone of fire strikes downrange, an elliptical pattern forms: the "beaten zone." As the distance to the target increases, the beaten zone usually becomes shorter and wider.

Bipods on light machine guns have been placed anywhere from the muzzle all the way back to the forearm. In general, as the bipod is moved forward (toward the muzzle), the cone of fire, or burst group, will decrease in size.

An excellent case in point is the BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle). The original M1918 version was not fitted with a bipod and proved impossible to control in the full-auto mode, irrespective of the various slings, sandbags and other devices that were used. Between 1920 and 1938 numerous mounts, mostly bipods, were tested on the BAR. Eventually a two-pound bipod was adopted and mounted just to the rear of the flash cone on what was to become the M1918A2 BAR. It is the same bipod location as that of the U.S. M1909 Benet-Mercie LMG. This location provides the maximum possible control over the weapon and produces the smallest possible burst groups. Using the fast cyclic rate, the BAR M1918A2 will consistently place a full 20-round burst into a two-by-three-inch square at 1,000 inches. This result is superior to that possible with many tripod-mounted, water-cooled medium machine guns. Thus the BAR went from a weapon almost too inaccurate for effective full-auto fire to one that comes close to lacking a useful cone of fire at combat ranges of 200 to 600 meters.

The fly in this ointment is most certainly that as the bipod's location is moved ever closer to the muzzle, its lateral maneuverability is sharply restricted. The arc of lateral movement is smallest with the bipod at the muzzle. Moving targets are more difficult to address quickly. Targets on the flanks cannot be engaged without lifting the weapon off the ground and repositioning it — an awkward movement from the prone position with weapon systems in the 20- to 25-pound range.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have the innovative, but flawed, Johnson M1941 light machine gun which had the bipod just in front of the forearm, 18 inches back from the muzzle. While the ability to pivot the weapon laterally on its mount is enhanced, the 12½-pound Johnson LMG flails wildly about, uncontrollable and inaccurate, when fired in the full-auto mode. Small cones of fire at long range can be delivered by the Johnson M1941 LMG only when it is fired semiautomatically.

The Germans, recognizing the dilemma, thoughtfully provided two bipod positions on the MG 34/42 series of guns. The preferred location, at the muzzle end, yielded extremely small cones of fire when these high-cyclic-rate machine guns were fired in short bursts. The rear mount position was actually designed for installation of the Dreifuess 34 lightweight antiaircraft tripod. However, when close-range flanking targets were anticipated, the bipod could be moved to this rearward point.

Practical chaps that they are, the British sought out the best compromise. The Bren gun's bipod is located to the rear of the gas regulator, where it serves double duty, as when occasionally rotated it scrapes and cleans the exterior of the gas cylinder.

With its bipod located at this spot, nine inches from the muzzle, the Bren gun is capable of delivering both acceptable accuracy and a useful distribution of fire at normal combat ranges for light machine guns. In addition, the arc of lateral movement is more than adequate for flanking coverage and the engagement of quickly moving frontal targets. As it did in so many other areas, the Bren gun, it would seem, offers the best of all possible bipod worlds.

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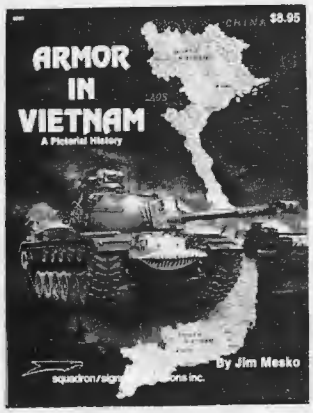

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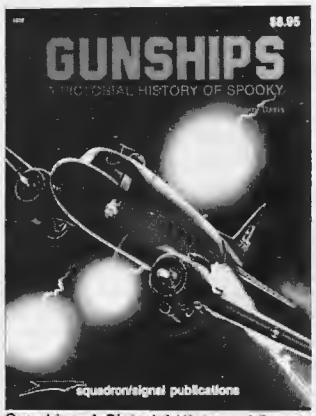

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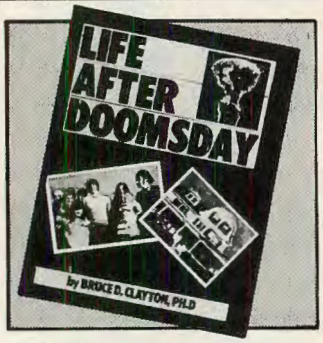

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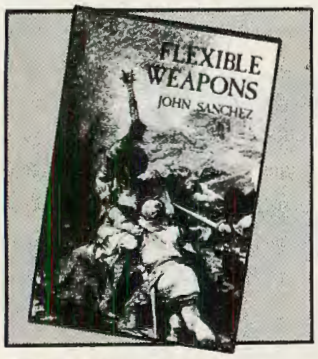
ISBN 0-87364-175-2 **$19.95**



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by John Sanchez

From the author of *Slash and Thrust* comes the definitive study on flexible weapons, complete with construction details and training methods. Revealing a unique dimension to self-defense, Sanchez examines the advantages to fighting with flexible weapons. Chain maces, maorikikusari, steel whips, meteor balls, and rope knives—all are treated individually and intensively. Their lethal potential is for *real*! And realism—physical and mental—is the bottom line in this book. The author offers programs for solo and partner training; the section on sparring techniques includes designs for mock weapons and protective gear. Line drawings illustrate assorted weapons, strikes, carries, engagement attitudes, and anatomical targets. Blocking, gripping, locking, roping, and thrusting are also discussed in specific detail. Sanchez's new manual is a companion piece to the popular *Slash and Thrust*; at the same time *Flexible Weapons* stands alone as a very special self-defense book. 5½ x 8½, softcover, illus., 80 pp.

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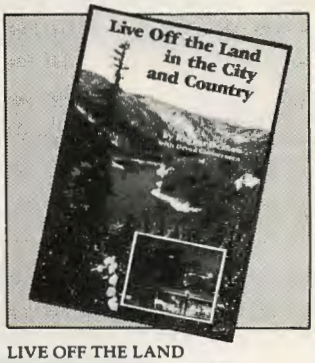

LIVE OFF THE LAND IN THE CITY AND COUNTRY

by Ragnar Benson

Not just another "eat roots and berries" book! Ragnar Benson, famed survival writer and best-selling Paladin author, looks back at his experiences while living off the land—even in the city—for the past forty years. He reveals a totally practical survival program unlike any other. Benson believes that wild, fresh game is the best source of nutrition in a do-or-die situation. He tells you how to find it, even in urban habitats.

Benson's all-new book covers how to make your own cache tubes and which supplies to store away in them. He also gives hands-on advice about survival medicine, firearms, reloading, fuel storage, diesel generators, retreating, etc. Other comprehensive, photo-illustrated chapters explain how to raise livestock and vegetables/grains the smart way. A gold mine of native American lore about curing hides, preserving meats and vegetables, foraging, and trapping the Indian way. Benson even provides plans for building your own A-frame cabin, just like his, from local timber in one summer—3,000 square feet of living space for under $10,000.

This complete guide to surviving in style is, of course, written in Benson's lively, down-home manner. Survivalists, retreaters, backpackers, and anyone looking for a more self-sufficient lifestyle should definitely have this one in their libraries! 5½ x 8½, hardcover, over 100 photos, 263 pp.

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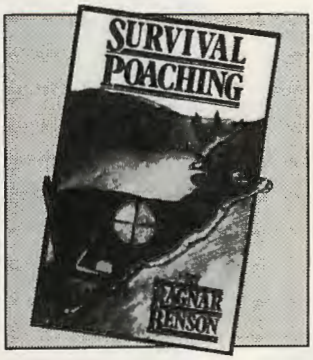

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by Ragnar Benson

Gives practical information on collecting large or small numbers of wild game under virtually any circumstances. The methods and traps described by Benson are known only to one Indian tribe and a few old-timers. Benson's uncle and teacher was a member of this tribe; Benson is an old-timer now with forty years of poaching experience behind him. He tells you how to get a deer any time you go hunting for one; how to live off the land, whether in the city or country; gives plans for dozens of ingenious, effective traps, snares, and deadfalls; also plans for permanent concealed traps for small game and fish; lessons on woodcraft and scouting; covers equipment, firearm selection, ammo choices, and more. 5½ x 8½, hardcover, illus., 250 pp.

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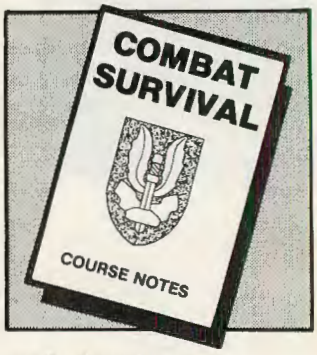

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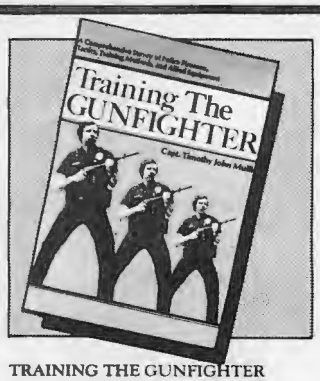

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by Capt. Timothy Mullin

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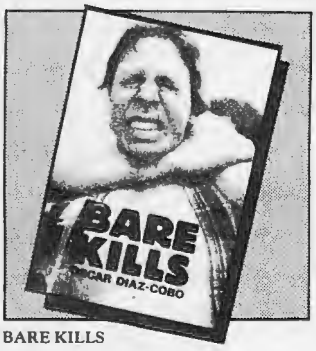

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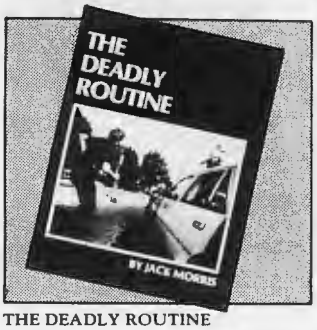

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by Jack Morris

Every day he's on patrol, a law enforcement officer lays his life on the line. Issuing a summons on a routine traffic stop, answering a domestic complaint, or responding to a report of a burglary in progress, he's a target for snipers, desperadoes, and nuts. Only a watchful, alert approach to these seemingly "routine" situations can prevent his needless wounding or death.

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Young Werwolf members are instructed in the fine art of using the Panzerfaust, a deadly throwaway antitank weapon that the Nazis mass-produced at the end of WWII. Note the five stripes on the SS instructor's right shoulder. They are close-quarter tank destruction awards, i.e. this man personally destroyed five tanks!

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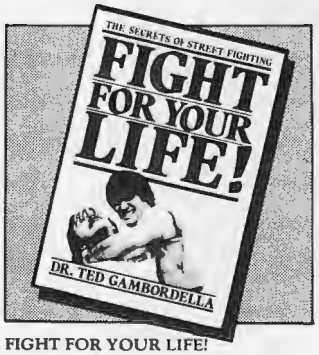
ISBN 0-87364-085-3 **$10.00**



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SS WERWOLF COMBAT INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Translated by Lt. Michael Fagnon

Werwolf—the name struck terror in the hearts of Germany's foes at the end of WWII. With the fanatical motto, "Hate is our prayer, revenge our battle cry!," these last-ditch SS guerrilla units were ordered to fight to the death.

The *SS Werwolf Combat Instruction Manual* tells the grim story of Nazi Germany's only organized guerrilla resistance movement and presents an exact reprint with translation of the SS manual used to instruct Werwolf members. All Werwolves were ordered to destroy their manuals at war's end—under threat of death!

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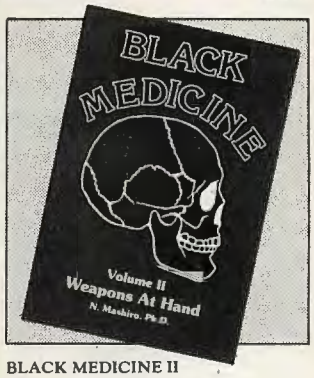

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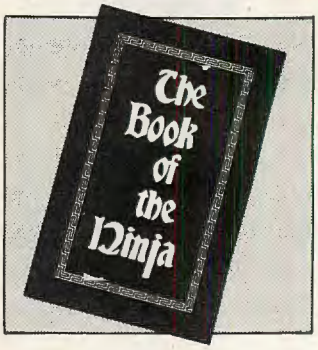

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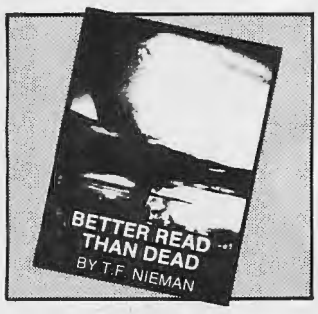

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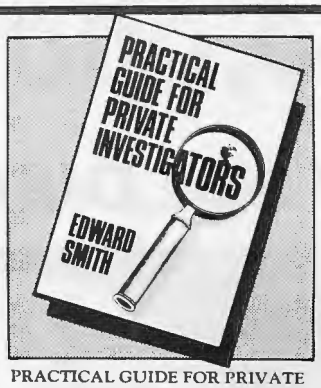

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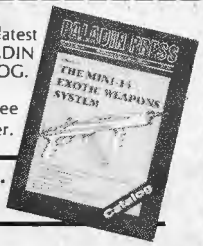

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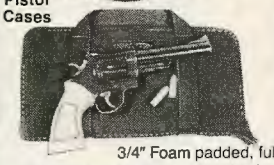

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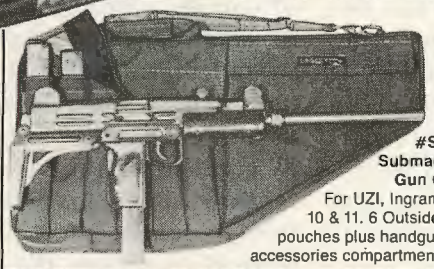

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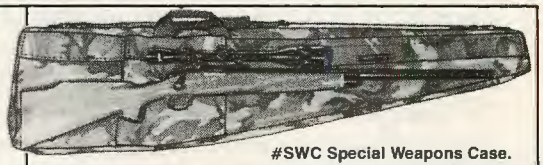

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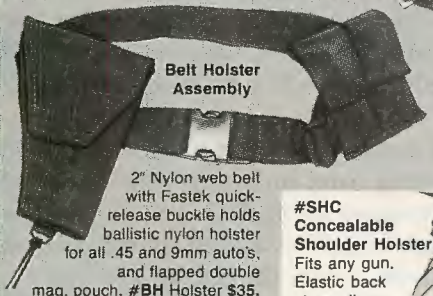

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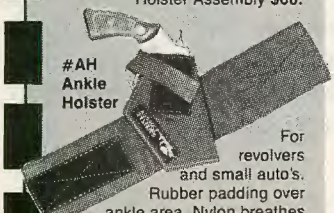

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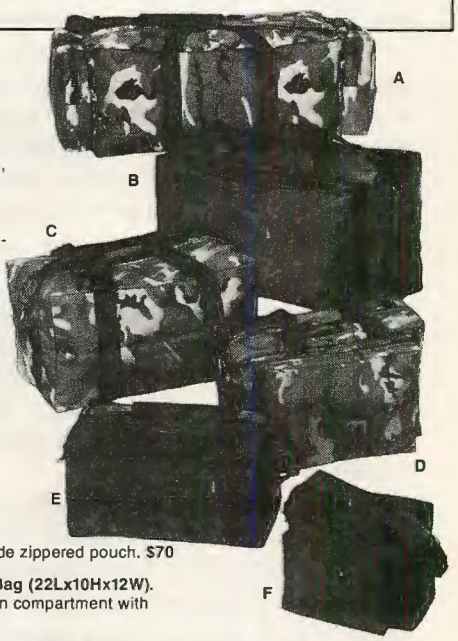

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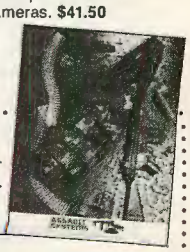

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EDITORIAL
Viet Vets: Prisoners of Prejudice
by Dave McPeak

TEN Common Misconceptions About Vietnam Veterans:

1. That we were dragged into military service: Two-thirds of the men and women who served in Vietnam volunteered for duty. In contrast, two-thirds of the people who served in World War II were drafted.

2. That Vietnam was somehow something less than a real war: Why then were there more total combat casualties for the Marine Corps in Vietnam than in WWII? Why then, according to the Department of Defense, were the chances of being killed in combat in Vietnam 85 in 1,000? In WWII, by comparison, the number was 12 in 1,000. Why then did Vietnam produce eight times as many paralyzed men as WWII, three times as many totally disabled and 35 percent more amputees? Why then out of the 300,000 wounded Vietnam War veterans are 12.4 percent totally disabled?

3. That we were somehow not as brave or did not sacrifice as much as our fathers did in previous wars: The American public, unfortunately, forgot the countless acts of incredible courage at Dak-To, Khe Sahn, Ia Drang Valley, Hue City and a thousand other unknown or too-soon forgotten places.

4. That these soldiers did not care about their comrades: Nothing could be further from the truth. We cared deeply then and still remember them every day and in our nightmares.

5. That Vietnam troops were habitual users of dangerous drugs: In fact, hard drugs never emerged on any scale until the final years of the Vietnam War.

6. That we faced an inferior enemy force: Again, untrue. We faced two enemy forces. First were the elusive, courageous Viet Cong who were fighting in their own backyard and were geniuses in camouflage and underground concealment and experts in improvising ambushes and booby traps. The second enemy was less well known by the American public, but probably a more formidable foe — the North Vietnamese Army. This well-trained, large army was equipped with artillery and 122mm Russian-made rockets. Most importantly, both groups carried the AK-47 assault rifles, high-velocity automatic weapons the likes of which were never faced by any previous American force. Furthermore, the Vietnamese now have the world's fourth largest army.

7. That we were mass killers of civilians: False. More civilians were killed in the four years of the Korean War than in eight years of the Vietnam War.

8. That the Vietnam troops were not as efficient as previous American soldiers: We were the youngest, best-educated, best-trained, best-equipped and most-decorated troops America has ever seen. And we never lost a major battle during our involvement.

9. That we are troubled: For many of us this is true. Although, considering the unique and tragic circumstances of our war, we are a remarkable group. We were sent to war alone and joined a unit of complete strangers. We experienced the trauma of total, absolute warfare and, if not severely wounded, we returned to a country which would not or could not welcome us, mourn our dead with us or recognize our sacrifices and courage. It is not by accident that the freed hostages from Iran were returned slowly to this country and will continue to have reunions of their group. Our government learned to reduce the frequency and intensity of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome from the mistakes it made when we returned and from the observation of the work done by Vietnam-veteran therapists at the Vet Centers.

10. The Vietnam veteran is ungrateful and demands to be seen as a hero: False. We are not ungrateful; we are honest. We received very little. A graphic example: In 1945 a GI's educational benefits included tuition, books, room and board, and a monthly stipend of $54. In contrast, a Vietnam veteran returning from the war in 1968 received only a monthly stipend of $130 and no tuition, room, board or other benefits. Furthermore, two weeks after their return, groundbreaking for a memorial to the Iran hostages was completed. Tragically, 10 years after the end of our war no memorial yet stands anywhere to console the hearts of the mothers who lost their sons fighting in Vietnam.

Finally, we do not wish to be seen as heroes because *our* heroes died in Vietnam.

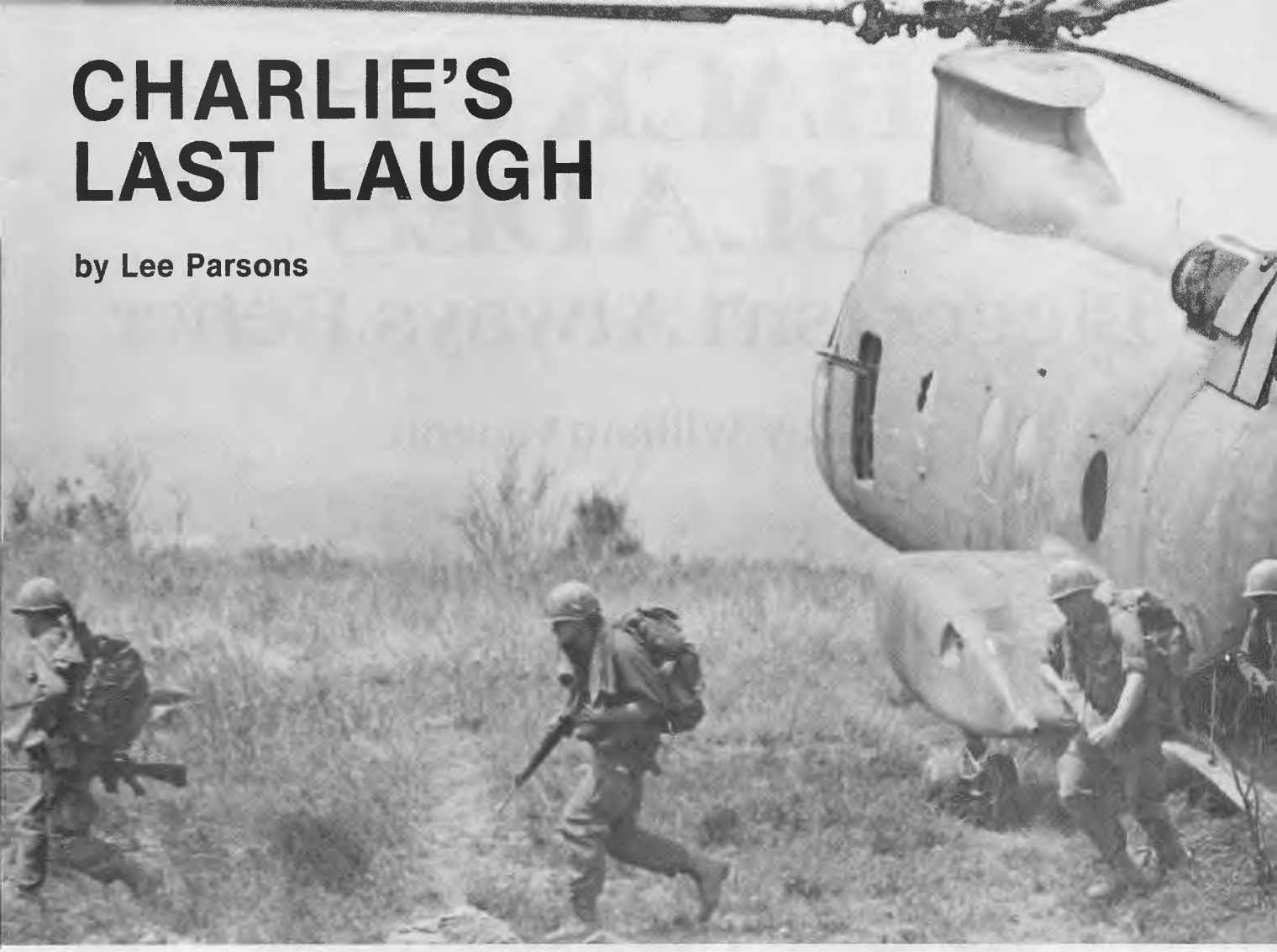
Dave McPeak was attached to an artillery unit with the 12th Marines in Vietnam from 1967-68. When he returned to the United States he was a 20-year-old veteran, and he still didn't have the right to vote.

After Vietnam, McPeak worked and went to school, receiving a B.A., then an M.A. in counseling from the University of West Virginia. Since January 1980 he has been a counselor at the Pittsburgh Veterans Center, leading groups for Vietnam combat veterans.

McPeak was inspired to write this editorial by an article by Fields of Fire *author James Webb (see "What the Vietnam Vet Needs," SOF, May 1980).*

CHARLIE'S LAST LAUGH

by Lee Parsons



I had been in 'Nam about 10 months of my second tour. It was October 1972, and the American involvement in Vietnam was coming to an end. I was assigned to the First Regional Assistance Command in Da Nang as the NCOIC of the Corps Message Center. The job was mostly routine desk work, but sometimes involved highlights such as midnight trips across Da Nang or tree-top-level flights as a courier to advisory teams in the field.

After Henry Kissinger came out with his "peace-is-at-hand" announcement, the problems began, and not only with the communists. The South Vietnamese were growing resentful of our ditching them, and a simple traffic accident could set off a three-day-long incident. We began to be even more cautious in our dealings with the Vietnamese and on our trips through Da Nang, usually in heavy traffic.

We were on a shift change one afternoon about 1730, and were weaving our way from the FRAC HQ to our barracks, a converted hotel on the harbor. It was a beautiful day and families were out along the Da Nang River watching the fishing boats returning. As usual there were wall-to-wall bicycles around us, and Spec. 4 Conrad, the driver, was trying to avoid them. While helping keep an eye on those that were coming alongside our International Scout, something started to bug me; something in the back of my mind started to scream *danger!* as the crowd of bikes swept past when we slowed. I tried to keep my M16 in hand (not easy in the passenger side of a Scout), but couldn't spot whatever it was that told me something was wrong.

It was then that I looked directly out to my right at one particular young man on a bike. He was smiling at me — a big, warm smile. It seemed to say, "I know something you don't know." I knew that something wasn't right, but I still couldn't identify what was wrong about him. He looked perfectly normal: about 18 years old, black pajamas, sandals, arm band .... Hey, that was it! The arm band! I had glimpsed it in the rear-view mirror, but I had grown complacent in the big city of Da Nang and it hadn't registered as it would have a couple of years before in the mountains of II Corps.

I struggled to get the M16 shouldered as the Scout weaved in traffic, my fellow passengers wondering what was going on. They hadn't seen the arm band before and it meant nothing to them. I got the rifle out the window, trying to bring it to bear on the young man, but he quickly disappeared in the traffic, still smiling.

Henry Kissinger didn't tell me the war was over, nor did President Nixon, nor any newspaper. That young man did, on a street in Da Nang. His arm band was the red, blue, and yellow flag of the NVA and his smile at a Scout full of American soldiers told it all.

ABOUT LEE PARSONS

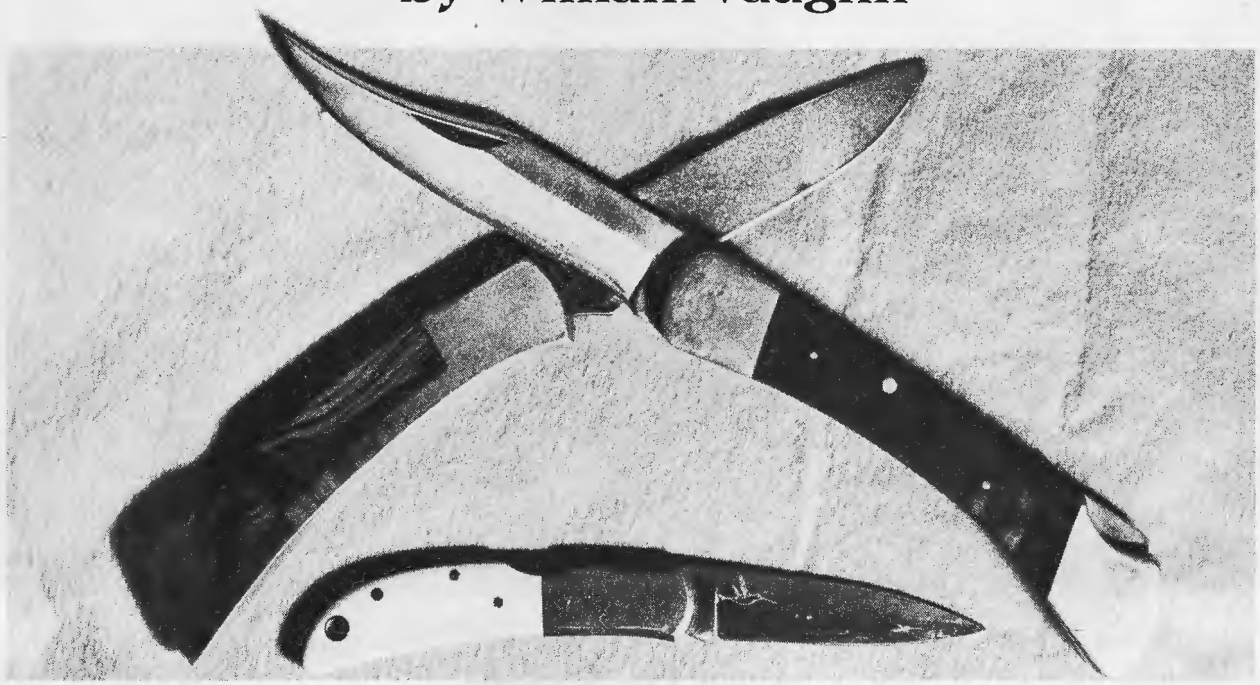
Lee Parsons first went to Vietnam in November of 1969, serving with the Air Cavalry, Troop C, out of Pleiku and An Khe. This story took place during his second tour, when he served with the First Regional Assistance Command in the Da Nang area. Parsons stayed with the Army after Vietnam, and finally left as a staff sergeant in 1977.

He now lives in Idaho, building disc memory drives for computers and, luckily for us, doing some writing as well. This is his first story for SOF, and we think it is a fine account of how one young man discovered that the war was over.

BACK UP BLADES

Bigger Isn't Always Better

by William Vaughn



LEFT: Single-blade Gerber folder with 3½-inch blade, a little large for everyday use, but durable, reliable knife with strong locking mechanism. CENTER: Al Mar "Hummingbird." This knife is slightly smaller than the "Eagle," but of same high-quality construction throughout. RIGHT: Famous Buck folding hunter. Too heavy and bulky to qualify as pocket-knife, but "old reliable" could have "carved Mount Rushmore." One of the most copied knives ever made. Photo: John Metzger

William Vaughn is the nom de guerre *of an Oregon police officer who is knowledgeable in the field of edged weapons — knives. In fact he carries one as his backup piece. He is a personal friend of famed knifemaker Al Mar — who endorses the opinions expressed in this story.*

SOME time ago, while ruminating (read: goofing off) on things in general — and sex and violence in particular — I wondered why knives are held in low esteem by Americans. I finally concluded that, with few exceptions, Americans have practically no tradition of edged weapons except in the hands of juvenile delinquents as portrayed in movies.

By the time our ancestors got here and began subjugating the indigenous personnel, firearms were *de rigeur* and no home was complete without one or more. We didn't need edged weapons; we used cutting tools instead which, while similar, are generally different in design and function.

Nowhere in our history is there a brave Highlander with his Claymore holding off invading hordes (no, I don't mean the mine, I mean the two-handed broad sword). About the best we can do by way of tradition is Jim Bowie and his legendary "Iron Mistress." We also hear the occasional reference to the Mountain Man and his Green River blade, but that was essentially a tool, not a weapon. Knives are also mentioned in our several little shoot fests, but generally only when attached to the end of a rifle; in other words, a bayonet.

Only the bad guys seem to use knives (Charlie Manson, Juan Corona, Jack the Ripper, et al.). Ever see John Wayne use a knife as a weapon? Hell no! He throws away his empty gun and hits the bad guy in the mouth. How Macho! How American! How Stupid!

A knife is perhaps the most valuable tool/weapon going. It's smaller than a MAC 10 and quieter than a frag.

Please understand, I'm a real knife enthusiast and I virtually always carry one. I usually don't have to use one as a weapon 'cuz I wear a gun too; but a good knife is nice to have around should the need arise.

I distinctly remember a would-be mugger in San Francisco that got a little pale around the mouth when I showed him a 2½-inch-long lock-blade folder I had in my hand while he was suggesting he needed my poke worse than I did. Oddly enough, during our discussion, he remembered a pressing engagement elsewhere. It must have been urgent, because he left so hurriedly he forgot to take my wallet, watch, credit cards, etc.

When I say knife, at least in this context, I'm not talking about some 12-inch-long fighting/survival knife. I'm talking about that most handy of all implements, the humble pocket knife. I realize that no SOFer worth his salt would be caught dead without an Arbuc-

kle, a Randall No. 1 or at least a Kabar, but they are a tad conspicuous under a suit and, in most parts of the country, are considered a concealed weapon. If you're going to get something that size to stash under your coat as a concealed weapon, just get a gun.

I'm a little too old and conservative to carry a switch blade taped to my leg (they are illegal around here anyway) and I can't find a decent German parachutist's gravity knife (they're also illegal), so I make do with three folding knives. The reason for three of them, I will explain directly.

My No. 1 knife is an old, beat-up single-blade Gerber folder given to me by a good friend. The blade is 2½ inches long and locks open. This particular design has been duplicated by just about everybody in the world and it's still a good one. The best part is that it's small, flat, light and doesn't spoil the cut of my suit trousers. It's a drop-point design that, with a little practice, can be opened with one hand (a real plus in my book). This knife is strictly a working tool and has been used and abused for about 10 years. It's the one I showed the would-be mugger. It has gone through airport security all over the world and never even raised the eyebrows of omnipresent officials.

Knife No. 2 is the "hunting" model. It's a three-inch blade Buck folding hunter. I've cut up game animals, cleaned fish, eaten dinner and done almost everything else you can think of with this knife — and I'm still not fond of it. For starters, it has never fit my hand properly and it's too damn big and heavy to qualify as a true pocket knife. If I'm going to carry a sheath knife on my belt, I want a lot more knife than that. I must give the knife credit though: It's so massive and brutish, I could have carved Mt. Rushmore with it.

Knife No. 3 is a bit more specialized than the others. It is a weapon, or at least that's why I got it. It's an Al Mar Eagle, a four-inch lock blade folder. I got it because it fits in my back pocket alongside my wallet and is virtually invisible there. The blade has a false edge halfway back on top, a point like a needle, and is sharp enough to shave with. I got this knife because I'm a cop and I get awfully tired of reading how yet another cop was killed with his own gun. If I can keep from getting shot for about two seconds after some hood gets my gun, he's going to get unzipped. This knife is my backup system, openable with one hand, deadly as a fer-de-lance and reassuring to have along when things get "dicey."

The blades on these knives are rather narrow and obviously not designed for slashing, but they are definitely not fragile. I'm told there is a man who throws these knives through automobile hoods, although that sounds like a poor way to stop a car (I'd prefer a LAW or a BAR). But it at least proves the knife can stand up to abuse for which it was never designed.

Now that I've bored you silly talking about my knives I'll make some suggestions based on my experience:

1. Don't be lured into the sucker trap of buying a folding hunter for everyday carry. They can cause legal problems due to length; they're hard to hide and uncomfortable to carry; and, besides, why do you need a knife that size for everyday use?

2. Buy an "everyday" knife less than three inches in blade length. In most jurisdictions, and almost all airports, that still qualifies as a "pocket knife" and the security-types won't confiscate it.

3. Unless you plan on using your knife in the field, don't bother with a tricky belt sheath. Sometimes it's prudent to get rid of anything that looks like a weapon, and a knife is easy to ditch, but that sheath means you practically have to take your trousers off to get rid of the thing.

The Humble Pocket Knife Is A Socially Acceptable Weapon

4. Make sure you can open your knife with one hand and, once opened, the blade locks. Multi-bladed non-locking knives look neat, but if you can't do it with one blade, you most likely can't do it at all. Blade locks are *imperative!* Ever had the blade close on your fingers? Gosh, that smarts. It can also take you out of the fight and get you dead. The one possible exception to this is one of the "Swiss Army" type knives that are virtually a folding tool box. In my opinion, they make poor tool kits and only fair knives, besides being bulky and heavy.

5. Don't be a cheapskate. Buy absolutely the best knife you can find. A good one will shoot hell out of $100, but so will a parachute, and if you need either one, there's no reasonable substitute for the best available. Remember, if a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't.

6. In point 4, I mentioned a key word that I want to return to: *fight.* I realize a little two- to three-inch knife isn't much of a weapon, but it's 100 percent better than nothing. And don't be fooled; you can be killed just as dead and just as fast with a small knife as a big one.

The biggest advantage to a small knife is that it's concealable. You don't wave a three-inch knife around and expect to scare someone to death with it. To make it work, you have to get dirty and get blood on your hands. And if you work it right, he'll never see it coming — or think you're just kidding around with that little thing. If you insist on going on the offensive with a knife, you can just about assume some flake will part your hair with a scotch bottle or some other "blunt instrument." I think you'd do better to hide the knife behind your leg or someplace; let him come to you, and then start cutting things close to the surface like tendons, veins and arteries.

A small knife will work as a thrusting weapon but not nearly as well as a big one. A small knife will, however, work very well close-in to disable your opponent so that you may, if you so desire, kill him at your leisure. A knife is essentially a defensive weapon or an offensive one if used covertly, and I suggest that if you find yourself using a knife in a fight, you remember this advice: "Let him come to you and then *do him.*"

It is not my purpose to try and sell you on the "perfect" pocket knife because I don't even know if it exists. A lot depends on what (or whom) you're doing and what the chances are of getting caught at it. Just remember that the humble pocket knife is a valuable, viable tool/weapon that is socially acceptable.

When knife shopping, look for the obvious things like fit, finish, smooth operation, solid hinge, solid blade locking and good steel (you may luck out and find out how hard the blade is; I'd say 56-60C Rockwell is about right), and you might even try for stainless steel for ease of maintenance. And, last but not least, get something simple to use. If it's tricky or trendy or cute or whatever, I almost guarantee the damn thing will break or malfunction the first time push goes to shove. That kind of a problem can lead to terminal complications of an otherwise simple operation.

The last thing your knife needs is *chi* or *magic* or *it* or whatever you choose to call it. When you pick it up and close your eyes, if you can't see yourself doing deeds of awesome skill and bravery with your little pocket knife and walking away unscathed, you've got the wrong knife. A G3 or an FN-FAL is neat, keen and groovy, but they're impersonal. A knife is about as personal as you can get, because you live with it day and night. It may be nothing more than a way to prevent dirty fingernails, but if it has that little bit of quality in it that gives you just the little extra required confidence and skill in a crisis, you may live long enough to clean your nails again.

AUGUSTO CESAR SANDINO

Was Latin America's Romantic Revolutionary the First Sandinista?

by Dr. John Hoyt Williams

International Latin revolutionaries: (left to right) Venezuelan Ruben Ardilla Gomez, Mexican Jose Paredes, Augusto Cesar Sandino and Augustin F. Marti. Photo: Wide World

EDITOR'S NOTE: In 1979 a ragtag but militarily effective group of guerrillas known as Sandinistas overthrew the government of Nicaragua and ousted President "Tachito" Somoza, known even to his friends as "the last Marine."

The Sandinistas, or more properly the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional *(FSLN), early in the revolution and briefly afterward, attracted enough diverse elements into their organization to conceal their true political nature. Not so today as the non-communist FSLN elements have been ruthlessly purged and even some leftist elements have defected. Both factions are currently trying to start a counter-revolution from bases in nearby Honduras and Costa Rica.*

The hard-core communists who planned and organized the revolution didn't choose their namesake — Augusto Cesar Sandino — at random. Sandino was a brilliant guerrilla leader, developer of insurgent tactics and a powerful force in the anti-American movement which swept through Latin America in the 1920s and 1930s: the days of banana republics, Marines and "gunboat diplomacy."

His name was selected for its charismatic value and as a rallying point for centrists and right-wing elements.

There is no doubt that Sandino was intensely anti-American and that's certainly a popular rallying point these days in Latin America — but did the communists have a valid claim for attaching his name to their revolution?

This story gives an historical basis for answering the question: Was Sandino principally an ideological revolutionary or merely a romantic revolutionary? Would Sandino stand with Che Guevara or Emiliano Zapata?

—Jim Graves

JUST after dawn, 26 January 1928, wary United States Marines probed into the still smoking ruins of El Chipote, several of their De Havilland bombers roaring protectively overhead. They had finally taken the legendary bandit headquarters — a fortified camp squatting atop a volcanic crag which jutted above the thick jungles of northern Nicaragua. They had taken very little else, however, for they claimed neither prisoners, bodies, weapons nor supplies. Augusto Cesar Sandino had once more slipped away with his men (as Carleton Beals, who was there, wrote), "leaving the Americans a deserted mountain top as the reward of months on end of skillful and cautious approach."

The first Sandinista was born in 1895 at Nicquinohomo, a village in the rustic northern province of Nueva Segovia near the Honduran border. Illegitimate son of a middle-class farmer and an Indian woman, Augusto Cesar Sandino worked for his father before buying his

own farm and beginning a grain-purchasing business. The clever young man was prosperous by rural standards before the age of 20 and knew and loved the land and the people he encountered while buying grain.

Sandino also learned to hate Americans. From 1912 to 1925 and again from 1926 to 1933 Nicaragua was an American client state, occupied and policed by *machos*: American Marines. Sandino bristled at the indignity of being searched by the foreigners who had dragged the mutilated body of Liberal Party hero Benjamin Zeledon through the streets of Nicquinohomo. Marines and Nicaraguan troops had displayed the body, but — like most of his countrymen — Sandino believed that U.S. Marine Maj. Smedley Butler had ordered the killing.

Along with many nationalistic Nicaraguans Sandino was insulted and infuriated when the United States took over the Nicaraguan banking and credit system. Drastically reduced credit may have introduced some order to the chaotic economy, but there was a price. Hundreds of small farmers who owned their own land were dispossessed. Broke and landless, Sandino took a job in an American-owned gold mine, but his anger with *Yanquis* led him north.

Sandino worked as he traveled through Honduras and Guatemala until he reached Mexico, where — in order to keep eating — he once again sought work with Americans. He took a job in Tampico, working for Standard Oil of Indiana.

The job experience was not wasted, since Sandino met Mexican radicals from the labor unions that contracted labor even for such bastions of American economic colonialism. Working with the Mexicans, Sandino learned of further American abuse of their neighbors in the form of American invasions of Mexico, but he also saw the dignity and worth of the Indian farmers who waged successful guerrilla campaigns against the Colossus of the North.

While Sandino labored for Standard Oil, Nicaraguan politics, always explosive, reached critical mass as Liberals and Conservatives again went for each others' throats. The United States, always more comfortable with Conservatives, had managed to install the pliant General Diaz as president in 1925, but as soon as the Marine occupation force evacuated the country, the Liberals began a massive revolt with all the earmarks of a nasty civil war. So successful were the Liberals in the field that American Marines returned to Nicaragua in 1926 to protect United States property and citizens, and guarantee Conservative rule.

Learning of the new revolution, Sandino returned to his native land, gathered about 100 volunteers in Nueva Segovia, and begged Liberal chief, Juan B. Sacasa, for arms. With 40 rifles (mostly American-made Enfields and Model 1918 Berettas) and a box of ammunition, Augusto Cesar Sandino took the field.

***Macho* displays battle trophy: captured home-made Sandinista flag. Photo: Wide World**

After a series of minor but successful campaigns in the north, Sandino's name was well known to both Nicaraguans and Americans. Despite his inexperience, he was proving to be a master of small-unit tactics. As 1927 dawned, however, President Coolidge sent ace diplomatic trouble-shooter (and soon to be Secretary of State) Henry Stimson to Nicaragua to work out a compromise to stabilize the country. By the time that gentleman stepped ashore, there were enough Marines in Nicaragua to constitute the 2,500-man 2nd Brigade, under Brig. Gen. Logan Feland. Also present was Marine Observation Squadron I (under Maj. Russ Rowell), whose pilots were already doing more bombing than observing.

Stimson, through cajolery, threat and modest bribery, worked a miracle. In May 1927, virtually every Liberal and Conservative leader signed the Peace of Tipitapa. This document called for the Conservative president to continue in office for one year, until fair elections — supervised by Americans — could be held. The *machos* would disarm both sides, maintain law and order, and create, train and in part officer a small, professional Guardia Nacional, which would be above politics and not identified with any political party. Coolidge

Sandinista Gen. Manuel Maria Jiron was captured by U.S. Marine patrol 3 February 1929. Photo: USMC

immediately authorized the sale to the Guardia of 3,000 Krag rifles, 200 Browning .30-caliber machine guns and 3,000,000 rounds of ammo at bargain prices.

From the northern hills, Sandino denounced both political parties as lackeys of the United States and vowed to go on fighting both foreigners and corrupt politicians until Nicaragua was free. Alone of the rebel chiefs Augusto Cesar Sandino would fight on.

Annoyed, Gen. Feland dispatched a battalion of the 5th Marines and some Nicaraguan auxiliaries, with air cover, to march north and silence Sandino and his estimated 150 "bandits," not understanding that Sandino commanded not only a handful of rebels, but also the respect and loyalty of the people of the north.

Moving into rebel territory, the Marine columns left a 50-man garrison in the town of Ocotal to guard communications and perhaps to bait Sandino. Having called up several hundred sympathizers from the immediate region to reinforce his tiny army, the rebel leader decided to attack.

Just after midnight, 16 July, Sandino attacked Ocotal with an estimated 500 men, showering the garrison's quarter of the town with rifle fire augmented by two captured machine guns. All through the night his raw *guerrilleros* poured voluminous but inaccurate fire into Ocotal. The astonished, but unhurt, Marine garrison responded with excellent fire control and unnerving marksmanship. As dawn broke, the Marines refused a demand for surrender, and about 0900, several De Havilland bombers swooped out of the clouds. They had been alerted by an observation plane which had accidentally spotted the battle, and the Marine pilots attacked three times that day. Twenty-five-pound fragmentation bombs and strafing decimated, terrified and disorganized the rebels. The Marine fliers won the first land victory ever decided by airpower. Sandino retreated so swiftly that he left 56 corpses around Ocotal, and it is estimated that at least 100 of his men were wounded, mostly from the air attacks. The Marine garrison suffered only one killed and five wounded.

The bulk of the 5th Battalion was soon hot on Sandino's trail, searching also for his rumored headquarters at El Chipote. On 19 September, part of Sandino's force was routed in a short, sharp fight at Telpaneca, the last time that Sandinista forces would openly confront major enemy units.

Early in October, a Marine airplane was downed in the jungles by Sandinista fire. The pilot and gunner were tried on Sandino's orders for atrocities, found guilty and promptly executed. This act enraged Marines, but villages had been hit without warning, mule trains strafed and the "hearts and minds" of the civilian population alienated. The more death and destruction the Marines unleashed from the skies, the more Sandino grew in stature and his treatment of downed fliers as murderers satisfied his people's demand for justice.

Jenny biplane, though designed as trainer, dropped bombs on Nicaraguan rebels in some of world's first air support missions. Photo: Wide World

U.S. Mail headed for home from Nicaragua guarded by Marines carrying M1911 .45 pistol and .30-'06 BAR in configuration much like original Browning design: full-auto shoulder or hip-fired weapon for assault use. Photo: USMC

Originally farmer and small businessman, Sandino is honored — and armed — celebrity at 1930 inauguration of Mexican President Pascual Ortiz Rubio. Photo: Wide World

Due to American airpower and his own lack of heavy weaponry, Sandino's concept of guerrilla warfare and his tactics evolved and became more sophisticated. Not only did he avoid conventional battles, but he decentralized his command. He divided his men into a number of "columns," each with its own area of operations and commander, and each expected to be self-sufficient. From a shifting headquarters — normally remote from the actual fighting — he would direct and orchestrate campaigns. He correctly realized that he was of too great symbolic value to be risked in combat. His columns were themselves subdivided into "patrols" of from 15 to 50 men, and these in some cases into "squads" of five to 10 guerrillas. In some areas, the rebels grew and produced their own food side by side with

the local peasants — excellent propaganda. On the move, food was "requisitioned" from the wealthiest of the farmers or purchased from peasants with cash extorted from the rich.

Communications were by means of runners — commonly young boys and girls — and trails were often cut or hollowed out of the jungle parallel to existing ones known to American pilots and Marines. It was not uncommon to have a platoon of *machos* marching along a trail just 20 yards from an invisible Sandinista unit.

When facing Marines or the Guardia, Sandino relied on ambush rather than siege, and his officers were ordered to retreat immediately if the enemy withstood the initial volley of fire. Not a learned theorist, Sandino intuitively grasped the concept of minimal-risk exposure for his fragile guerrilla bands. This was wise, for by mid-1928 there were 4,600 Marines in Nicaragua and some 30 military aircraft (amphibians, Fokker transports, Vought Corsairs, Curtis Falcons and De Havillands).

He also understood that when ambushing an enemy column it is wise to permit him a recognizable, open line of retreat, so that he does not feel trapped and doomed, and succumb to the "fight-or-die syndrome." It is far better, he realized, to demoralize the enemy rather than make him fight with his back to the wall.

A column of Marines and Guardia about 200 strong ran into a major Sandinista force on the Jicaro River, near Quilali, on 30 December. The column was marching toward El Chipote — which was being routinely bombed — when they collided with the rebels and, outnumbered, they retreated to Quilali with some 30 wounded. The rebels soon had the small town surrounded and under siege, but once again, Maj. Rowell's planes came to the rescue. In addition to bombing and strafing Sandinista positions, the Marine aircraft used the dusty main street as a landing strip, evacuating wounded and bringing in ammo and supplies. The rebels were helpless to do more than tear a few holes in the wing fabric with their rifles.

When Marine reinforcements arrived, the guerrillas melted into their hills, Sandino slipped across the border into sympathetic Honduras to purchase weapons and rest his men, and the Americans took the empty "fortress" of El Chipote.

In February 1928, Sandino recrossed into Nicaragua with a large number of foreigners in his ranks. Most of these were Latin American, but two Marine deserters were among them. Calling his revolutionary forces "the soul and nerves of the Fatherland and the race," Sandino became a phantom, striking specific targets only when he saw fit and evaporating when major Marine/Guardia forces were sent against him. Like George Washington he could take a small, hard-core column into an area and flesh it out with hundreds of sympathizers for a special operation. Those part-time guerrillas would remain behind in their role as peasants when the rebel column moved on.

Machos — "he-men" — is what the Nicaraguans called the Marines who controlled their politics through much of the early 20th century. Campaign hats, leggings and lanyarded M1911 Colt are standard WWI issue — but submachine gun is 1928 Thompson, first carried into battle as issue weapon during Sandinista campaign. Photo: USMC

Had Sandino access to more arms he could have placed a dozen large columns in the field, for Carleton Beals was not exaggerating when he wrote, "If Sandino had arms he could raise an army of 10,000 men by snapping his fingers." As it was, even his most experienced units were armed with an odd collection of Krags, Enfields, Berettas, Mausers and shotguns. As time went on, however, his forces acquired an increasing number of Browning Automatic Rifles, Thompson submachine guns and Browning light machine guns. These were captured from raids on Guardia posts, from Guardia deserters and from dead Marines — but Sandino never acquired them in great quantity.

The Marines and the Guardia tended to fight conventionally, moving in large columns which were, by nature, road-bound. The many garrisons merely immobilized more good American troops. Foreshadowing Mao's dictum that a guerrilla should be like a fish in water, Sandino and his men operated freely among their people, who gladly helped him with recruits, food, intelligence and sanctuary.

There were a few Americans, however, who learned how to best wage guerrilla war and they did so by becoming guerrillas themselves, often with the disapproval of the high brass. Among these unusual men was the legendary Capt. Merrit ("Red Mike") Edson, who later commanded a Marine Raiders battalion in WWII.

Edson finally won permission in mid-1928 to lead patrols of selected men along the malarial Coco River, deep in Sandino territory. Traveling light, Edson's small units plunged deep into the swampy jungle, popping up where no American was expected by the rebels. Resupplied by free-fall airdrop, Edson kept pressure on the Sandinistas, surprising a few of their smaller camps and depots, forcing the enemy to keep moving. Both insurgent and Marine losses were light, but the guerrillas were thrown off balance, deprived of secure bases, forced to change operational timetables and somewhat demoralized.

Later, in 1932, when American public opinion had soured on the intervention, similar tactics were used by another Marine Corps legend. Lt. Lewis B. ("Chesty") Puller, with the rank of captain in the Guardia, selected one other American and some 30 rural Guardias for long-range penetration work. Com-

pany M, its few supplies carried by a dozen mules, cut itself adrift from the conventional military for months at a time.

Careful to placate local civilians, familiar with the terrain, often traveling overland and at night, Company M frayed the nerves of more than one Sandinista commander and upped the body count — on one occasion fighting four skirmishes in 10 days and killing at least 30 rebels. A Marine Corps post-mortem on the campaign as a whole belatedly acknowledged Puller's tactics and asserted that if a Company M could have dogged the heels of each of Sandino's eight major columns, the Marines might have won. A recent study by counter-insurgency expert Neill Macaulay agrees, noting, "Wars against guerrillas are won by de-escalating them into wars of patrol actions."

Unfortunately, the brass in the field regarded the activities of Edson and Puller only as interesting experiments.

Ironically, Sandino's most significant defeat was political. Despite promises to the contrary, he utterly failed to disrupt and discredit the national elections of 1928 and after. More than 1,000 heavily armed Marines and at least as many Guardia served as highly efficient poll-watchers, and in November, Gen. Moncada, an ex-revolutionary Liberal, was elected.

This was quite a blow to the rebel, and he slipped out of Nicaragua and traveled to Mexico, seeking arms and financial support from the anti-American government there. For the year he was in Mexico (mostly in Merida), his movement languished at home, many of his men accepting the government's lenient amnesty program. "Banditry" declined so much, in fact, that in late 1929, the 11th Marine Regiment sailed for the United States and deactivation.

While he did generate superb propaganda from Mexico and won private donations and foreign recruits, Sandino received no official help from the Mexican government and clashed with the communists, who had hoped to claim him as one of their own. As a front-line soldier fighting against the forces of imperialism, Moscow saw Sandino as a foot in the door of the Western Hemisphere. Accordingly, at the 1928 Sixth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, a special resolution honored the Nicaraguan "Patriot." By the time he visited Mexico, however, he had publicly declared his distrust of communism and announced that he owed no debts to any foreign ideology. Robert J. Alexander wrote of the men in the Kremlin: "They tried to 'capture' him, and when they finally failed to do so, they turned violently against him," accusing Sandino of "counter-productive, infantile violence."

Sandino's appeal was to the romantic, not the ideological, revolutionary. He played upon common Latin American strings of anti-Americanism, anti-imperialism and economic and political freedom. This is why alone of 20th-century guerrilla movements, his attracted supporters from all over the hemisphere. His demands were disarmingly simple, first appearing in an article by Carleton Beals in *The Nation*, in February 1928. Sandino claimed that he would cease his activities entirely if:

A) All foreign military forces evacuated Nicaragua.

B) A civilian provisional president was appointed who had never *been* president or had run previously for the office.

C) Honest presidential elections were later held under the supervision of *Latin American* observers.

Under increasing domestic and foreign pressure to withdraw from Nicaragua, President Hoover announced late in his term that all U.S. troops would leave that country in early 1933, following new national elections, which they were to police.

By this time, the war had stabilized ... almost ritualized. Sandino was left relatively unmolested in the northern third of the country. He made no attempt to conquer more territory, contenting himself with sizable raiding expeditions along both coasts, increasingly selecting ranches, plantations and mines owned by North Americans as targets. This replenished his treasury, kept him in world headlines, won the kudos of anti-Americans everywhere and allowed him to quietly build up his strength. Ironically, it was at this stage that Sandino most resembled a bandit in his operations.

In 1930 and 1931, the Guardia Nacional was fully shaped, built to a strength of over 2,000 men, trained, armed and officered by a small number of Marine officers and NCOs. Increasingly, counter-insurgency was turned over to the Guardia, whose top-ranking native officer was Anastacio Somoza Debayle. It was becoming a credible force in its own right.

As Marine strength was cut back, Americans served more and more as garrison troops, while the Guardia took to the field offensively.

With the war "Nicaraguanized," the elections of 1932 were held in relative tranquility. Sandino's one major attack during the election period was a disaster. A force of more than 100 Sandinistas attacked a train carrying arms along a newly inaugurated rail line. Unfortunately for the rebels, aboard were "Chesty" Puller and Company M. Thirty-one insurgent corpses littered the right-of-way as the train rumbled past.

On New Year's day, 1933, Liberal Juan B. Sacasa, the man who had given Sandino his first guns, was sworn in as president with much pomp and ceremony. Twenty-four hours later, the last companies of Marines sailed from Corinto on a creaking, leased freighter. Within a month, through intermediaries, Sandino and Sacasa worked out a preliminary accord for an end to the struggle. An agreement was subsequently signed ending the insurrection. Augusto Cesar Sandino disbanded his forces — save for a 200-man bodyguard — recognized the Sacasa government and received permission to create a large farmers' cooperative on government land along the Coco River.

The Sandino rebellion was over, but there was one man, new Guardia *jefe* Anastacio Somoza, who wanted to guarantee it. A man of overwhelming ambition, Somoza trusted neither rebels nor politicians, and as commander of the only military force in Nicaragua, he was determined to liquidate both. In February 1934, in a carefully planned operation, a picked squad of Guardia troops captured Sandino as he emerged from a dinner with President Sacasa. He was murdered.

Somoza denied complicity, swearing to apprehend those responsible. Instead, he simply bided his time, built up the Guardia more, and in 1936 took over the nation in a coup. He ruled Nicaragua with an iron fist — and United States approval — until he himself was gunned down in 1961 and his sons took over. In the 1960s and 1970s, Anastacio Junior ("Tachito") found himself reliving history as a rebel organization called the "Sandinista Front" slowly grew in size and energy. After years of vicious fighting in the small towns and countryside, the Sandinistas triumphed in 1979. Even though the successful rebels relied heavily upon Cuban support and are fast sliding to the totalitarian Left, Augusto Cesar Sandino *would* have appreciated their sincerely expressed belief that "Tachito" Somoza "was simply the last Marine." ✠

POLYMATH

John Hoyt Williams earned his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 1969 and is professor of Latin American History and Inter-American Relations at Indiana State University. He is published in Spanish and English on the British invasion of Argentina during the Napoleonic wars, the Paraguayan revolution, Madeira wine, the Manila galleon trade and Tae Kwon Do. Journals edited by Dr. Williams include *Americas, Handbook of Latin American Studies* (published by the Library of Congress), *Canadian Review* and *Studies in Nationalism*.

— Bill Guthrie

MESS KIT MESS

New Ideas On Combat Cuisine

Text & Photos by Larry Dring

The world's armies' cook kits: (left to right) French, Italian, English, German, Korean and Japanese. Skeleton-key shaped handle under Japanese kit is copied by Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Korean and Chinese armies and fits all their cook kits. Better than bail for use in fire.

SINCE the beans and bacon days of the U.S. Army, the Army mess kit and griping about it have been two constants in an otherwise rapidly changing world. The bottom was designed to fry meat and the top became a divided tray to hand-carry through mess lines. It worked that way, but now we mainly heat ration cans and the kit doesn't do that well. Furthermore, the American soldier in Vietnam often found himself cooking foraged food, and if it couldn't be fried he was in trouble. The raw grains that feed most of the rest of the world are real hard to fry.

When the American grunt tried to heat C-rats by the fire — since his canteen cup wasn't big enough to boil them and the fry-pan was too shallow — he threw two-thirds away. The bottom was burnt, the middle was hot and the top was cold.

A new Army mess kit, one designed with cooking in mind, would have many benefits, not the least of which would be eliminating hard, heavy cans from the infantryman's pack. The Army already has the basic rations for this system: Long Range Patrol freeze-dried foods. We had them in 'Nam, but they had their own problems. Once again, these problems were caused by the cook kit.

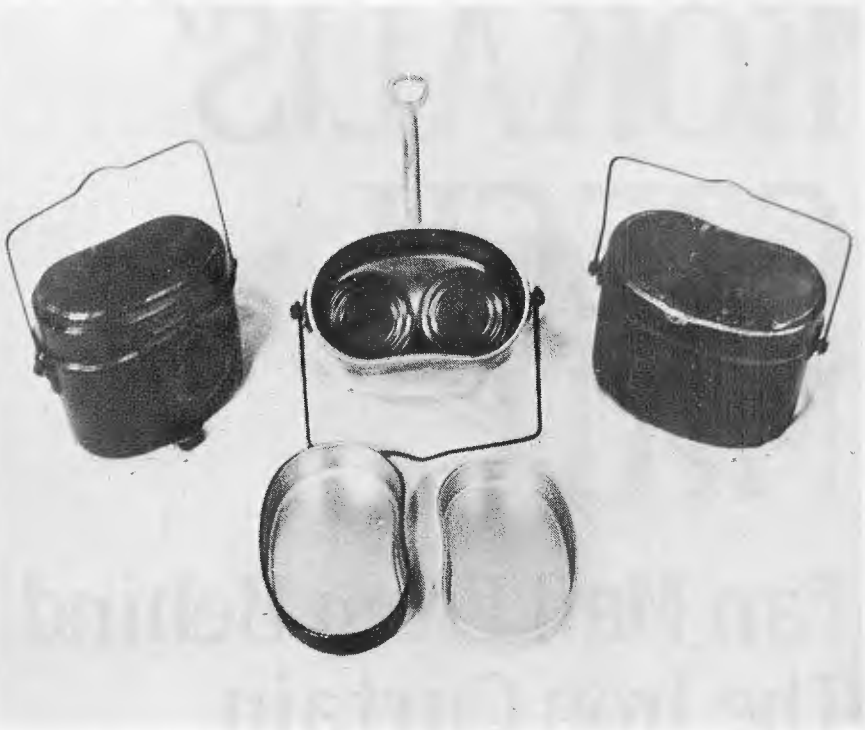
The favorite water boiler of the stuff provided by the Army was the canteen cup. We had to use it because the rest of the kit didn't work at all. The canteen cup worked poorly because its narrow bottom and silver surface didn't give much area for heat absorption and reflected most of the heat that hit the cup. Also, when some heat did manage to get into the water you automatically lost part of that heat through the uncovered top. Any housewife can tell you how much longer it takes to boil something without a lid.

What I would like to suggest to the Army and the individual soldier would be a real cook kit. Developing a good C-rat boiler can't answer the grunt's problem, because boiled C-rat cans are little bombs.

Army medical accident reports are full of accounts of injuries from exploding ration cans. They explode in fires, they explode in pots of boiling water, and they even explode when you've got them out of whatever heats them and you're trying to open them.

American soldiers have long known that their allies' and enemies' mess kits cook better than the Army's. There's little reason to go into too much detail on what the different cook kits are like: The interesting thing is how similar they all are. The European kits almost all have a big pot. The pot will hold two full C-ration cans or four small ones. In case the soldier does use the pot to boil cans, he piles the cans in a wire or perforated metal holder with a bail handle and lowers them into the water in the pot. Heat is retained and, to a certain extent, the men are protected from exploding cans by a lid that fits over the pot and the can-holding insert.

The Asians use the same rig, but they have two level marks on the side of the pot that are not on the European kits. These marks are there in case Mom didn't teach a guy to boil rice before he left home. You put rice in to the low mark, add water to the high mark and put it over the fire. Even a Marine could do it.



German kit on left, Korean on right, Japanese in center with four small ration cans inside and pot handle attached.

You can not only cook in these kits, but putting C-rat cans in water and heating the covered water pan just to a boil is the safest and most effective way of heating canned rations. These kits will do that. When you're done, no water is wasted. It becomes coffee, tea, shaving water or can even be used to wash what little dirt may get on the pot.

The Army issue pot ought to be roughly modeled on the other major armies' cook kits. It can be oblong or it can be kidney-shaped, as long as it has a can-holding insert that's big enough for two big or four little ration cans and has a lid. The corners on the oblong kits may be harder to clean, but there's not really that much difference.

There really wouldn't be much difference in cleaning if the kit were coated on the inside with some non-stick surface. I'm not a chemist, so I don't know which one would work best. Teflon® is a little delicate, but it works. I've also heard that if it gets burnt the flakes that come off the coating are high in poisonous fluorine compounds. I don't think anybody has died from it, yet. But that's no problem. We don't need to use it. There are lots of sturdy coatings that don't burn as easily. Imagine, fellow graduates of Combat Infantry, if you'd been able to wipe your cooking mistakes out of your canteen cup. But then you wouldn't have all those tender memories of sand and sticks and raw finger tips.

There's one other big advantage to coated aluminum cookware: Any aluminum in your food is too much. But that's not all that gets in it from the aluminum alloys used in cheap pots. I don't know where the Army gets their aluminum, but there's a lot of imported aluminum around with lead in it and that's even worse. Non-stick coatings keep the metals from getting into the water you boil. It's really not that much of a problem with water, as long as it's not stored in an aluminum pot, but acid liquids change that. The acids in fruit, juices, vinegar, alcoholic beverages and even highly seasoned foods all help dissolve that aluminum and whatever else is in the pot into whatever you're cooking. A non-stick coat would almost stop that.

The next thing that would give our Army the best cook kit in the world would be to paint it. The shiny aluminum reflects the heat you're trying to get into the water. That's dumb. Black would be the best color, and black, heat-resistant stove-paint in an aerosol can could be issued for touch-up. Of course, any dark color would do, and with all the different kinds of heat-resistant paint around these days, you could camouflage the pots, too. Even if light-colored desert camouflage had to be used, it doesn't reflect nearly as much heat as the mirror-like bottom of a metal pot.

If we had a real kit, I bet that soldiers would carry it, instead of throwing away everything but the canteen cup. My cook kit would work, it would save money from "lost" materiel and it would increase the American grunt's chances of surviving in the bush. I wish I'd had it during my years in recon on various sides of various borders in the Southeast Asian War Games.

LARRY DRING: SOLDIER OF LUCK

There's no point in trying to give Dring a biography here. He's been too many people in too many places at too many times. If you really want to know who he is check SOF's February, March and April '82 issues.

Having an active man's contempt for equivocation before a hostile audience, Larry's business card proclaims him to be: "World Traveller, Adventurer, Assassin, Thug, Hired Killer, Gunman at Large LAWRENCE W. DRING, Soldier of Fortune Specializing in Civil Wars. For Revolutions and Coups, Large or Small, Foreign and Domestic Call Indochina Special Forces Co. and Jungle Fighters Association Ltd."

Besides having a running engagement as a stand-up comic of the grisly, Dring has also been a captain in the Special Forces, Minister of Agriculture for the Republic of Korea for about three minutes and the loyal and loving husband of the nurse who cared for him when he had six inches of femoral artery shot away in a gunfight in Vietnam. Of course, the perpetrator did not escape.

Shot and gushing blood from the ripped-open inside of his thigh, Larry clung to consciousness long enough to feed the VC a magazine from his M1 carbine. When he came to, he complained that he was losing his touch and was sure that Charlie had got away, because no matter how many times Dring shot him the Cong kept moving across the pavement, even after falling over. The medics who cleaned up the mess Dring had left assured him that the job was done, and that it was perfectly normal for even a corpse to move every time it is hit with a bullet at a range of 10 feet.

Insofar as SOF has a coherent editorial policy, it is our policy to approve of that kind of soldier.

— Bill Guthrie

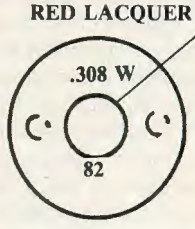
KOKALIS' CZECH MATE

Fan Mail From Behind The Iron Curtain

10 May 1982

DEAR Mr. Kokalis:
I have read March '82 issue of SOF which was smuggled into my country.

It could be interesting for you to know that not United States only are trying to hide origin of their makes. Here is the most recent 7.62x51 ammo marking of Czechoslovakian manufacture:



It is brass-cased and manufactured in huge quantities for export. For your further information: .223 martial ammo is currently made in this country. It is supplied, for instance, to Cambodia. That country uses it for its M16A1 rifles supplied by Vietnam. The .223 ammo is Berdan-primed, but Boxer-primed ammo can also be produced using primers of West German origin. Manufacture of CS Boxer primers is being prepared.

On the page 76 of the March '82 SOF, there is a very interesting mention on the proposed M16A2 rifle. It forced me to make a few notes:

It is surprising that U.S. Army wants to improve M16A1 which is without any doubt of inferior and complicated design and cannot be improved, I believe. Technical and tactical disadvantages of the rifle are basic and it is not possible to solve them with a few cosmetic changes. The gas system of the rifle can be best described as a combination of a central heating and a steam engine rather than rugged and simple heart of the service rifle. Also combination of charging handle and forward-assist assembly is true monument of design incompetency when compared with strong cocking handle of AK and others.

From tactical point of view, the M16A1 has some serious drawbacks:

- Complicated gas system supports fouling and leads to functional unreliability;
- those cavities and curved surfaces inside bolt-carrier group hardly can be kept clean under field conditions;
- folding stock cannot be designed at all.

It is a sad fact that nation with such great firearm tradition has selected such poor weapons for its armed forces.

Perhaps it would be of your interest to know that extensive tests were carried in this country with M16s captured in Vietnam. Conclusion: "...Not reliable weapon prone to stoppages of complicated design which cannot be properly maintained under combat conditions." And "...when military value of the new Soviet AK-74 is 1, then value of M16 is somewhere between 0.7 and 0.8." Thus far this is official evaluation.

Knowing that M16A1 is criticized in the USA, too, I believe an article on this topic would be interesting for the readers of SOF magazine. It could also be a part of effort to prevent issue of M16A2 rifle.

Motherland of great J.M. Browning deserves a better rifle, I think.

Yours truly
Name Withheld
Czechoslovakia

Soldier of Fortune *is smuggled into a number of communist countries and it pleases us no end that we are so despised by the masters of these slave states. For obvious reasons, I cannot identify the author of this most interesting letter sent to me from Czechoslovakia, but he appears to be highly placed in the Czech armament industry.*

His comments are fascinating and reveal some interesting intelligence data. That Czechoslovakia manufactures ball ammunition in caliber 7.62x51mm NATO has been known for more than a decade. Bulgaria does as well, and 7.62mm NATO ammo from both of these Combloc countries was commonly supplied to the PLO in Lebanon. However, previous lots of Czech ammo in this caliber were headstamped "ZV" and "7,62" along with the date of manufacture. To drop the country of origin and change over to the sporting-caliber designation, ".308," may indicate the Czechs are now manufacturing larger quantities than they care to admit.

Even more interesting is the information that Czechoslovakia now produces ball ammunition in caliber 5.56mm NATO. This is not commonly held knowledge in the Western world. How disgusting to learn that the West Germans, whom we have subsidized ever since the end of WWII, are more than willing to provide munitions components to a communist country that is a demonstrated supplier of the implements of war to the world's leftist terrorist organizations. It's not particularly surprising though, as the West Germans have been playing footsie with their Combloc neighbors for some time now.

The statement that Cambodia uses M16A1 rifles supplied by Vietnam opens up an intriguing can of worms. How many M16 rifles has Colt produced? How many M16 rifles were abandoned in Vietnam? How many M16 rifles have been given to countries such as Israel? Colt claims to have manufactured no more than 4.5 million. Yet, recent specimens I have personally examined carried serial numbers well over the 9.5 million mark. I do not believe that Colt arbitrarily skipped five million serial numbers.

Continued on page 103

WORD WAR

Vietnam Lost On Front Pages Not In Front Lines

by Robert Elegant

Pulitzer-Prize-winning photo illustrates media impact on reality of war: Press coverage showed only South Vietnamese officer's execution of unarmed civilian, omitting fact that victim was head of VC murder squad, responsible for killing RVN soldiers, policemen and their families during Tet '68, and that officer had been in combat for more than 24 hours, directing defense of Saigon. Photo: Wide World

IN the early 1960s, when the Vietnam War became a big story, most foreign correspondents assigned to cover the story wrote primarily to win the approbation of the crowd, above all their own crowd. As a result, in my view, the self-proving system of reporting they created became ever further detached from political and military realities because it instinctively concentrated on its own self-justification.

The American press, naturally dominant in an "American war," somehow felt obliged to be less objective than partisan, to take sides, for it was inspired by the "investigative" reporting that burgeoned in the United States in these impassioned years. The press was instinctively "agin the government" — and, at least reflexively, for Saigon's enemies.

During the latter half of the 15-year American involvement in Vietnam the media became the primary battlefield. Illusory events reported by the press as well as real events within the press corps were more decisive than the clash of arms or the contention of ideologies. For the first time in modern history, the outcome of a war was determined not on the battlefield, but on the printed page and, above all, on the television screen.

Looking back coolly, I believe it can be said (surprising as it may still sound) that South Vietnamese and American forces actually won the limited military struggle. They virtually crushed the Viet Cong in the South, the "native" guerrillas who were directed, reinforced and equipped from Hanoi; and thereafter they threw back the invasion by regular North Vietnamese divisions. Nonetheless, the war was finally lost to the invaders after the U.S. disengagement because the political pressures built up by the media had made it quite impossible for Washington to maintain even the minimal material and moral support that would have enabled the Saigon regime to continue effective resistance.

Since I am considering causes rather than effects, the demoralization of the

West, particularly the United States, that preceded and followed the fall of South Vietnam is beyond the scope of this article. It is, however, interesting to wonder whether Angola, Afghanistan and Iran would have occurred *if* Saigon had not fallen amid nearly universal odium — that is to say, *if* the "Vietnam Syndrome," for which the press (in my view) was largely responsible, had not afflicted the Carter administration and paralyzed American will. On the credit side, largely despite the press, the People's Republic of China would almost certainly not have purged itself of the Maoist doctrine of "worldwide liberation through people's war" and, later, would not have come to blows with Hanoi if the defense of South Vietnam had not been maintained for so long.

"You could be hard about it and deny that there was a brotherhood working there, but what else could you call it?" Michael Herr asked this question in *Dispatches*, a personally honest, but basically deceptive book, which declares, "But ... all you ever talked about was the war, and they could come to seem like two different wars at the same time. Because who but another correspondent could talk the kind of *mythical* war you *wanted* to hear described?"

I have added the italics: For in the words "mythical" and "wanted" the essential truth is laid bare. In my own personal experience most correspondents *wanted* to talk chiefly to other correspondents to confirm their own *mythical* vision of the war. What I can only call surrealistic reporting constantly fed on itself; and did not diminish thereby, but swelled into ever more grotesque shapes. I found the process equally reprehensible for being in no small part unwitting.

John le Carre (whose extravagant encomium adorns the cover of the Pan edition of *Dispatches*: "The best book I have ever read on men and war in our times") is, I feel, too clever a writer to believe he painted an even proximately accurate picture of Southeast Asia in *The Honourable Schoolboy* (1972). But he brilliantly depicted the press corps and the correspondents' Asia, an encapsulated, self-defining world whirling in its own eccentric orbit. Correspondents, briefly set down in the brutally alienating milieu called Vietnam, turned to each other for professional sustenance and emotional comfort. After all, there was nowhere else to turn, certainly not to stark reality, which was both elusive and repellent.

Most correspondents were isolated from the Vietnamese by ignorance of their language and culture, as well as by a measure of race estrangement. Most were isolated from the quixotic American Army establishment, itself often as confused as they themselves were, by their moralistic attitudes and their political prejudices. Inevitably, they came to write for each other.

To be sure, the approbation of his

Marine UH-34s lift supplies to ARVN in 1964. The only chopper available to Corps in mid-60s carried reporters to operations as well as soldiers and cargo. Photo: USMC

own crowd gave a certain fullness to the correspondent's life in exile that reached beyond the irksome routine of reporting and writing. The disapprobation of his peers could transform him into a bitterly defensive misanthrope. Even the experienced correspondents, to whom Asia was "home" rather than a hostile temporary environment, formed their own little self-defensive world within the larger world of the newcomers.

It was no wonder that correspondents writing to win the approbation of other correspondents in that insidiously collegial atmosphere produced reporting that was remarkably homogeneous. After each other, correspondents wrote to win the approbation of their editors, who controlled their professional lives and who were closely linked with the intellectual community at home.

The consensus of that third circle, the domestic intelligentsia, derived largely from correspondents' reports and in turn served to determine the nature of those reports. If dispatches did not accord with that consensus, approbation was withheld. Only in the last instance did correspondents address themselves to the general public, the mass of lay readers and viewers.

It was my impression that most correspondents were, in one respect, very much like the ambitious soldiers they derided. A tour in Vietnam was almost essential to promotion for a U.S. Regular Army officer, and a combat command was the best road to rapid advancement. Covering the biggest continuing story in the world was not absolutely essential to a correspondent's rise, but it was an invaluable cachet. Quick careers were made by spectacular reporting of the obvious fact that men, women and children were being killed; fame or at least notoriety rewarded the correspondent who became part of the action — rather than a mere observer — by influencing events directly.

Journalists, particularly those serving in television, were therefore, like soldiers, "rotated" to Vietnam. Few were given time to develop the knowledge, and indeed the intellectual instincts, necessary to report the war in the round. Only a few remained in-country for years, though the experienced Far Eastern correspondents visited regularly from Hong Kong, Singapore and Tokyo. Not surprisingly, one found that most reporting veered farther and farther from the fundamental political, economic and military realities of the war, for these were usually not spectacular. Reporting Vietnam became a closed, self-generating system sustained largely by the acclaim the participants lavished on each other in almost equal measure to the opprobrium they heaped on "the Establishment," a fashionable and very vulnerable target.

For some journalists, perhaps most, a moment of truth through self-examination was never to come. The farther they were from the real conflict, the more smugly self-approving they now remain as commentators who led the public to expect a brave new world when the North Vietnamese finally "liberated" South Vietnam. Even those correspondents who today gingerly confess to some errors or distortion usually insist that the true fault was not theirs at all, but Washington's. The enormity of having helped in one way or another to bring tens of millions under grinding totalitarian rule — and having tilted the global balance of power — appears too great to acknowledge. It is easier to absolve one's self by blaming exclusively Johnson, Nixon and Kissinger.

I found few American correspondents to be as tough-minded as one Briton I knew who was very close to the action for many years in the employ of an American wire service. "I'm ashamed of most of what I wrote in Vietnam," he told me recently. "But I was a new boy, and I took my lead from the Americans, who were afire with the crusading spirit of '60s journalism — the involvement, man, in the good fight. When I look at what's happened now, I'm ashamed of my ignorance and what I helped to do to the Vietnamese...."

As one West German correspondent has confessed (Uwe Siemon-Netto in the *International Herald Tribune*, reprinted in *Encounter*, October 1979): "Having covered the Vietnam War over a period of five years for West German publications, I am now haunted by the role we journalists have played over there.

"Those of us who had wanted to find out knew of the evil nature of the Hanoi regime. We knew that, in 1956, close to 50,000 peasants were executed in North

Vietnam. We knew that after the division of the country nearly one million North Vietnamese fled to the South. Many of us have seen the tortured and carved-up bodies of men, women and children executed by the Viet Cong in the early phases of the war. And many of us saw, in 1968, the mass graves of Hue, saw the corpses of thousands of civilians still festively dressed for Tet, the Vietnamese New Year.

"Why, for heaven's sake, did we not report about these expressions of deliberate North Vietnamese strategy at least as extensively as of the My Lai massacre and other such isolated incidents that were definitely not part of the U.S. policy in Vietnam?

"What prompted us to make our readers believe that the communists, once in power in all of Vietnam, would behave benignly? What made us, first and foremost Anthony Lewis [*New York Times*], belittle warnings by U.S. officials that a communist victory would result in a massacre?

"Why did we ignore the fact that the man responsible for the executions of 50,000 peasants, Truong Chinh, was — and still is — one of the most powerful figures in Hanoi? What made us think that he and his comrades would have mercy for the vanquished South Vietnamese? What compelled, for example, Anthony Lewis shortly after the fall of Saigon to pat himself on the shoulder and write, 'so much for the talk of a massacre'?

"True, no Cambodian-style massacre took place in Vietnam. It's just that Hanoi coolly drives its ethnic Chinese and opponents into the sea.

"Are we journalists not in part responsible for the death of the tens of thousands who drowned? And are we not in part responsible for the hostile reception accorded to those who survive? Did we not turn public opinion against them, portraying them, as one singularly ignoble cartoon did in the United States, as a bunch of pimps, whores, war profiteers, corrupt generals or, at best, outright reactionaries?

"Considering that today's Vietnam tragedy may have a lot to do with the way we reported yesterday's Vietnam tragedy, considering that we journalists might have our fair share of guilt for the inhuman way the world treats those who are being expelled by an inhuman regime which some of us had pictured as heroic, I think at least a little humility would be in order for us old Vietnam hands...."

Journalistic institutions are, of course, rarely afflicted by false modesty. They have not disclaimed credit for the outcome of the war, and their representatives have taken public bows for their successful intervention. The multitude of professional prizes bestowed upon the "big-story" coverage of Vietnam certainly implied approval of the general effort.

Under fire in the press and the paddies, anonymous American soldier crouches in long grass near Bien Hoa in 1965. Box magazines taped side-to-side furnished quick reload for 7.62 M14. Photo: U.S. Army

However, the media have been rather coy; they have not declared that they played a key role in the conflict. They have not proudly trumpeted Hanoi's repeated expressions of gratitude to the mass media of the non-communist world, although Hanoi has indeed affirmed that it could not have won "without the Western press." The Western press appears either unaware of the direct connection between cause (its reporting) and effect (the Western defeat in Vietnam), or strangely reluctant to proclaim that the pen and the camera proved decisively mightier than the bayonet and ultra-modern weapons.

Nor have the media dwelt upon the glaring inconsistency between the expectation they raised of peaceful, prosperous development after Saigon's collapse and the present postwar circumstances in Indochina. Unquestionably, a number of those approvingly characterized by *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis as "critics of the American war" have protested against brutal repression in Cambodia. Some (including Lewis, and the French journalist Jean Lacouture) even confessed that their expectations of the consequences of a communist victory in Cambodia were mistaken.

But none, to my knowledge, has suggested that he might have erred fundamentally in his vehement and total oppostion to the U.S. role in Indochina. Instead, most partial confessions have concluded with renewed denunciations of American actions.

Jean Lacouture did offer a public *mea culpa* for having championed the Khmer Rouge. Reviewing a book on "Democratic Kampuchea," he confessed: "Francois Ponchoud's *Cambodia, Year Zero* can be read only with shame by those of us who supported the Khmer Rouge cause .... And it will cause distress to those of us journalists who, after the massacre of 17 of our colleagues in April and May 1971, tried to explain these deaths as part of the hazards of covering a disorganized guerrilla war. In fact, our poor comrades were assassinated — some, we know, clubbed to death — by the valiant guerrillas of Khieu Samphan, the 'socialist' Khmer who now bars foreign observers from Cambodian soil. His people remain in terror-stricken confinement, one of his regime's more rational decisions: for how could it let the outside world see its burying of a civilization?..."

The reporters — and even the contrite Jean Lacouture — have continued to disregard the testimony regarding earlier North Vietnamese coercion offered by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia's former chief-of-state. Sihanouk complained in 1973 that he had been forced to tolerate North Vietnam using Cambodia as a supply route, training camp and proving ground for its forces in South Vietnam, although he knew the massive incursion was destroying his country. Preoccupied with their condemnation of U.S. intervention in Indochina, the "critics of the American war" have virtually ignored Sihanouk's indictment of the North Vietnamese — just as they have ignored the fact that Sihanouk had, albeit under duress, tolerated American bombing of North Vietnamese strongholds in Cambodia, the "unilateral action" for which those critics still pillory Henry Kissinger.

The same critics were *not* outraged at the final conquest of South Vietnam in 1975 by columns of Russian-built tanks supported by batteries of Russian-made

Winning hearts and minds was part of war in Southeast Asia that was neglected on home front: Free exchange of ideas bore unexpected fruit. Photo: R.K. Brown

artillery. (That was Hanoi's second try; the first, in 1972, failed because the Saigon regime was still supported by U.S. air power and was still receiving adequate U.S. war materiel.) These righteous critics have taken little note of the detailed description of that final conquest published by North Vietnam's Sr. Gen. Van Tien Dung in the spring of 1976. Gen. Dung's account (128 single-spaced pages in English translation) proudly affirmed that the assault was ordered by the Political Bureau of the Labor (Communist) Party of North Vietnam, planned by the Labor Party's Central Military Affairs Committee, commanded by Northern generals, supplied from the North and mounted by regular divisions of the People's Army of the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam.

Even before Gen. Dung's report, it should have been clear that the remnants of the Viet Cong — the Southern "guerrilla force" made up primarily of Northerners — were inherently capable neither of maneuvering 700 tanks in conventional formations nor, for that matter, of building and operating the double pipeline that fueled those tanks with petroleum from the North. Just as they subsequently passed over Gen. Dung's explicit revelations, the "critics of the American war" ignored such empirical evidence that Saigon fell not to an indigenous people in arms, but to an external invasion mounted by vanguard cadres who considered themselves ideologically superior to their Southern compatriots.

To take note of these obtrusive facts would have called into question the very nature of the war in Indochina — as it would to have taken note of them during the conflict. Any searching analysis of fundamental premises has remained as unthinkable to "the critics" as it was during the fighting. They have remained committed to the proposition that the American role in Indochina was totally reprehensible and inexcusable, while the North Vietnamese role — and, by extension, the roles of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the Pathet Lao in Laos — was righteous, magnanimous and just. Even the growing number who finally deplored the repressive consequences of the totalitarian victory could not bring themselves to re-examine the premises that led them to contribute so decisively to those victories.

Most correspondents on the scene were moved by the same conviction of American guilt, which was so fixed that it resisted all the evidence pointing to a much more complex reality. Employed in the service of that crusading fervor was, for the first time, the most emotionally moving medium of all.

Television, its thrusting and simplistic character shaping its message, was most shocking because it was most immediate. The Vietnam War was a presence in homes throughout the world. Who could seriously doubt the veracity of so plausible and so moving a witness in one's own living room?

At any given moment, a million images were available to the camera's lens in Saigon alone — and hundreds of millions throughout Indochina. But TV crews naturally preferred the most dramatic. That, after all, was their business — show business. It was not news to film farmers peacefully tilling their rice-fields, though it might have been argued that nothing happening *was* news when the American public had been led to believe that almost every Vietnamese farmer was regularly threatened by the Viet Cong, constantly imperiled by battle and rarely safe from indiscriminate U.S. bombing.

A few hard, documented instances. A burning village was news, even though it was a deserted village used in a Marine training exercise — even though the television correspondent had handed his Zippo lighter to a noncommissioned officer with the suggestion that he set fire to an abandoned house. American soldiers cutting ears off a Viet Cong corpse was news — even if the cameraman had offered the soldiers his knife and "dared" them to take those grisly souvenirs. (Since the antics of the media were definitely not news, the network refrained from apologizing for the contrived "event" when a special investigation called the facts to its attention.) Cargo nets full of dead South Vietnamese soldiers being lowered by helicopters were news — even if that image implicity contradicted the prevailing conviction that the South Vietnamese never fought, but invariably threw away their weapons and ran.

The competition in beastliness among the networks was even more intense than the similar competition among the representatives of the print media. Only rarely did television depict peaceful fields in which water buffaloes pulled ploughs for diligent farmers — undisturbed by air-bursts, rockets, infantrymen or guerrillas. One special report *was*, however, devoted largely to depicting bucolic scenes and untraveled roads when Prince Norodom Sihanouk invited a television correspondent to tour the border areas of Cambodia to prove that his country was *not* being used by the North Vietnamese as a base for operations against South Vietnam. A few years later, Sihanouk, of course, acknowledged that the North Vietnamese *had* at the time been — and had remained — intensely active in precisely those areas. But television could "prove" either a negative or a positive

War became so unpopular among soldiers in Vietnam that release from a fight they were not allowed to win became their only joyous ritual. These soldiers prepare to return to "The World" and learn how press coverage defined their precarious position. Photo: U.S. Army

proposition — depending on where the camera pointed and upon the correspondent's inclination.

In fairness, a number of newspaper correspondents also endorsed Sihanouk's contention that there were no North Vietnamese soldiers in Cambodia. Since the correspondents had seen no invaders, there were, patently, no invaders to be seen. The assumption of omniscience that lay behind so much of the coverage of Indochina remains awe-inspiring.

Television reports had one distinct advantage. A picture of nothing was, obviously, more convincing than a printed report of nothing.

One of the most persistent "horror stories" was retailed by the Western newspapers and magazines because television could not, obviously, take pictures of torture. Did interrogators ever push an incommunicative prisoner out of a helicopter to encourage his fellows to talk? No such atrocity has ever been confirmed, despite the swarms of investigative reporters and the many eager informants among officers and diplomats, whose indignation against stupid and inefficient policies was transmuted by the press into indignant protest against the war itself.

One such "incident," staged with a corpse, was turned up by the meticulous research of Gunter Lewy for his book, *America in Vietnam*, which should be required reading for all war correspondents. A U.S. soldier acquired a photograph of that grisly incident, and went on to invent an account of how a prisoner was killed by being hurled from a helicopter. The imagined event was given wide coverage.

Such skewed reporting occurred frequently; it was sometimes major and sometimes trivial. Since I am discussing motivations, not drawing up any kind of indictment, a catalog of such incidents would be superfluous. But a few striking examples may help to make the general point. First, the case of the imaginary general told by a British colleague.

An American correspondent who was later to write a highly praised book on Vietnam was chuckling over a telegram in the terrace cafe of the Hotel Continental, known to habitues as "the Continental Shelf." His editors had asked him to confirm that it would be neither libelous nor vexatious to quote the U.S. general who had in the correspondent's last dispatch been highly critical of the entire American effort — on the Continental Shelf (which generals, by the way, did not frequent).

"Of course," he told his questioner, "I cabled them to go ahead and not worry. Why should they? After all, I made that general up." The imaginary

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A LONG LOOK
THE
NOBOD

by Rick Venable

CONCRETE information on technical aspects of the war is hard to come by. The Israelis never talk much about their techniques because they may want to use them again. American authorities say little because they don't want to seem to be meddling in the affairs of another nation. Both the United States and the Israelis don't want the Soviets to learn anything. Neither does SOF. The following is either correct or as nearly so as available sources would allow. Observations and conclusions come from talks with Pentagon officials, Israeli sources and personal observation in Lebanon:

1) Israeli forces intended from the beginning of the campaign to take Beirut. The talk about a 25-mile buffer zone was intended to lull the PLO — who expected a comparatively minor reprisal raid — into staying in Beirut, where they could be trapped. It worked. The talk about a 25-mile zone also kept international pressure against Israel from arising until it was too late.

Many Israelis admit that taking Beirut would be the logical next step in a long-term, carefully planned campaign to ensure Israel's safety. The '67 war served to capture the West Bank, which cuts Israel nearly in two, and the Golan Heights, which gave Syria an artillery base overlooking Israeli territory, and the Sinai Peninsula, which provided a buffer zone against Egypt.

The next step was to conclude a peace treaty with Egypt, Israel's largest enemy; this removed the worst threat and also fragmented the Arabs, who promptly turned against Egypt. This left Israel militarily superior to any country around her. The next step was to take Lebanon and crush the PLO, the last active threat on Israel's borders.

2) The Air War. Several factors account for Israel's superb kill ratio — close to 90 to two — in the air. Against Syrian aircraft, mostly MiG-21s and 23s, the Israelis deployed Grumman E-2C Hawkeye mini-AWACS radar recce planes; these are the standard planes used by the U.S. Navy for protecting carriers. The Hawkeyes use advanced look-down radar that let Israel watch the MiGs as they took off from Syrian bases, and intercept them with ease.

Further, the Israelis have far better pilots. Arabs are not good militarily, say Israelis, because they are Third-World people who just don't have the technical grasp that advanced countries have. They don't seem able to get the most out of complex equipment.

The Israeli planes — the incomparable General Dynamics F-16 and the McDonnell-Douglas F-15 — outclassed the mid-'50s vintage MiG-21 and the export MiG-23s of the Syrians. In this country the liberal press complains constantly

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AT LEBANON WAR Y WON

by Donna DuVall

NO one seemed overly surprised about Israel's Peace for Galilee operation. In fact, the Lebanese, PLO, Syrians and members of the Western press had been predicting it for months — since early January. It first appeared that the offensive would be conducted before the April Sinai withdrawal by Israel. American pressure postponed it.

Israel had advertised its intention to invade southern Lebanon through thinly disguised attempts to provoke the PLO, in order to provide them with an excuse. The PLO, recognizing the necessity of remaining in southern Lebanon, demurred.

What was surprising was the force, speed and ease with which the invasion swept through southern Lebanon, up the Mediterranean coast and up the central slopes of the Lebanon Mountains into Beirut in less than a week. At the end of six days, the Israelis had exceeded their own expectations. Over 6,000 PLO guerrillas had been driven into hiding in encircled west Beirut, clearing southern Lebanon of Palestinian strongholds from which they shelled Israeli settlements. In this blitzkrieg, Israel demonstrated its military superiority over any of its Arab neighbors, a capability based in large part on American-built and supplied aircraft, electronic equipment and weaponry and on a well-trained and disciplined Israeli Defense Force, 30,000 strong.

The architect of the Peace for Galilee plan was Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. Its stated ***raison d'etre*** was to create an arms-free zone at least 25 miles wide around the Israeli-southern Lebanon border. However, by the end of the second day, few believed that the Israelis would stop short of Beirut — if they had ever considered it. SOF's Jim Morris (p. 56) and Rick Venable (p. 50) were inside Lebanon soon after the war began: They disagreed over Israel's intentions.

Many believe that Israel's attack was designed to destroy the PLO as an armed presence in Lebanon, force the Syrians to withdraw from the Bekaa Valley and create a friendly, strong Lebanese government to protect Israel's northern border. At least one of those objectives has been met, but the other two are still up in the air.

The PLO have been dispersed to the many corners of the Arab world, and PLO leader Yassir Arafat has taken up residence in Tunisia. Presidential elections held in the middle of the PLO evacuations — with the armed Israeli presence still in Lebanon — gave Israel their Lebanese leader of choice, 34-year-old Bashir Gemayel. However, before Gemayel could assume office, he was assassinated by a rival faction. As leader of the Christian Lebanese Forces militia, Gemayel had been openly allied with and supplied by Israel in the past, and he reportedly met with Sharon in February while Op-

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about real or imagined defects of the two U.S. fighters. The Israelis say they are the best in the world — period. They prefer the light, agile F-16, which, although it lacks the F-15's electronics, is a more lethal clear-weather dogfighter.

A star performer of the war, largely ignored by the Western press is the AIM-9L Sidewinder. If you don't follow warplanes carefully, you may think this is the old Sidewinder that has been around for years. It isn't. The "L" makes the difference. It is the first all-aspect Sidewinder, which means that you don't have to get behind an enemy to fire it. In fact you can fire at him head on or from the side. The missile's infrared sensors home in on the heat of the enemy's hull as it moves through the air.

This is an incredible advantage, especially on intercepts, because it means you get a free first shot. I talked to hippies around the Lebanese border who described amazing turns and pursuits the missile made to hit MiGs.

The AIM-9L did much to make British pilots look good in the Falklands. As one pilot said, "With that thing, a flagpole could win dogfights."

Regarding the destruction of Syrian SAMs in the Bekaa Valley: A lot of these were the highly potent SAM-6, as well as older missiles, that shot down so many Israeli planes in the '73 war. In fact, after that war many civilians decided that fighters were obsolete, which shows that civilians shouldn't try to think too much. The Israelis seem to have gotten them as follows:

First, for many months they sent RPVs — remotely piloted vehicles — over the Syrian missile batteries to force them to turn on their radar. Either distant Israeli recce planes then recorded the radar emissions for analysis, or else the drones carried transceivers that sent the emissions back for analysis before they were blown out of the sky. Israel knew exactly what to expect from the radar and thus how to jam it.

Further, Israel had a Boeing 707 filled with sophisticated jamming gear. From a distance it blanked Syrian screens, blinding them: Not much is known about this bird, nor ever will be.

Then smart bombs, heavy attacks from all directions at once, missiles that home in on radar and anti-IR countermeasures like hot-air balloons just blew the Syrians away.

The implication for air combat is clear: High-tech is better. Tricky expensive planes work better — much better. And the battle against SAMs is not missile against plane, but signal processor vs. signal processor.

3) The Ground War: This was not particularly interesting, being largely a quick lunge by a vastly superior force against an unprepared and not very good enemy. The Israelis moved fast,

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FORTRESS ISRAEL

by Jim Morris

From their fearsome reputation, I had expected the Israelis to be an army of smartly turned-out, gung-ho troops. I soon learned that military courtesy and spit and polish were far down on a priorities list that was headed by tactics and training.

I have been told that the more elite the unit, the sloppier it is. Boots are bloused or not at the whim of the individual. Berets are worn folded or shoved through an epaulet; they wouldn't fit on the hair anyway. The Israelis see no parallel between hair length and combat effectiveness.

Going to Metulla on the first day of Operation Galilee, I gave a ride to a young paratrooper on the way to his unit. His boots were unshined, but his SAR was spotless.

The Israeli soldiers carry their personal weapons everywhere and I never saw an obvious gig on one. They were lightly oiled and perfectly cleaned, with all the creases, cracks and crevices immaculate.

"It's like a second wife," one Israeli lieutenant said.

The Israeli Defense Force consists of every man with four limbs and two eyes between the ages of 18 and 55. For women, the ages are 19 to 35. Most battalion commanders are under 30. But beyond that, the entire nation is part of the defense effort.

Israel, in the best of times, is a nation on alert. It can have 20,000 reservists on a six-hour stand-by alert, which was used in the Peace for Galilee operation. The Israeli Army, as far as I know, is the only one that hitchhikes to combat. All reservists keep personal weapons and web gear at home, and upon mobilization, troops hitchhike to designated points. Any Israeli travellers, military or civilian, will give them a ride.

Their basic fighting unit is the tank-infantry team. In 1973 during the Yom Kippur War, the Israelis became temporarily infatuated with the idea that they could fight with tanks alone — and lost a bunch of them. Now they fight with each tank paired with an infantry squad in an APC — except for their own Merkova, which has room for a squad in it, and is therefore both a tank *and* an APC.

The infantry carried Galil assault rifles. The Galil SARs are for paratroops and commandos, the M16s for artillery and support troops. Rumor has it that the Israelis have captured so many AKs in Lebanon that they will start manufacturing ammo for them, and issue them to troops.

The Israeli Defense Force is informal, but because of their training and discipline, they don't take many cas-

LEFT: No stickler for uniform, Israeli soldier balances atop bristling M113 APC. Photo: Rick Venable ABOVE: Apartment lights and HE illuminate Beirut skyline. War has limited tourist attraction, and civilians tried to ignore fighting as they lived in it for years. Photo: Courtesy Lebanese Christian Forces. RIGHT: Two days after Israeli occupation of ancient Nabatiye, local market back in business. Photo: Jim Morris

ualties. They can't afford to; there aren't many of them. They were taken by surprise in 1973 and lost two thousand casualties, their worst to date. It seems as though everybody in Israel lost a member of his immediate family in that war.

One trooper told me: "If one of us takes out twenty PLO and then gets killed, he has failed because he was more valuable to us than those twenty were to them."

After the heavy losses in 1973, the Israelis set out to revamp their military force. They had learned that, in modern warfare, being better is not always enough — you also need numerical superiority. So they built a bigger and better military, with sophisticated weapons, more troops, better equipment and new improved tactics.

In 1973, the IDF had only 2,000 tanks; today it has 3,500. APCs have increased from 3,000 to 8,000. The few dated anti-tank missiles it had in 1973 have been replaced with thousands of state-of-the-art missiles. Similar improvements have been made in the air force. Over 600 combat aircraft are available today, including many American-built F-16 Fighting Falcons and F-15 Eagle fighters. "Smart" weapons, television-guided for pinpoint accuracy, and electronic anti-radar devices have greatly improved the Israeli Air Force. The Israelis have amassed an awesome military force, one in which they are very confident.

"Motivation," one soldier explained to me, "is the key to the Israeli Army."

I thought I knew what he meant, but later I saw a perfect example.

I was in Metulla one morning when the kids were going to school. Metulla is Israel's northernmost city and looks like a suburb of Phoenix — except that every house has immediate access to a bomb shelter. The kids looked just like American school children, dressed in jeans and T-shirts or dresses. Many mothers escorted young children along the streets clogged with military APCs, half-tracks and trucks.

At one corner, a young mother and daughter, about seven, stood waiting to cross when a three-quarter-ton truck drove by. The two guys in front were tired, bearded and dirty, maybe four hours out of the fighting, and not much more before going back in.

The little girl squealed and jumped on the running board of the truck to give the driver a big hug. The dust from southern Lebanon smeared her school dress; his dirty, bearded face scraped the soft skin of her neck. He was a reservist from Metulla; she was his daughter. Motivation.

eration Peace for Galilee was being planned.

Gemayel's death was untimely for Lebanon and Israel because Israel counted on having a friendly, strong, grateful man as president. At press time, Gemayel's successor had not been selected, but unless Lebanon's 39-year unwritten but strictly observed tradition is broken, the position will be filled with another Christian Maronite of similar persuasion, though without the personal following of Gemayel.

With the PLO gone — and with them the pretext on which the Syrians entered Lebanon — and Israel's rout of the Soviet-equipped Syrian Army in the Bekaa Valley, synchronized Syrian and Israeli withdrawal still is possible.

After months of stalling, Israel decided to move at dawn on Sunday, 6 June. The provocation for the attack was the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador to England, Shlomo Argov, in London. The Israelis retaliated by bombing a PLO ammunition dump in the city stadium in west Beirut. PLO forces attacked the Israeli city of Metulla with rockets — and the war was on.

Israel's three-pronged attack — by air, sea and mobile infantry — was to be a swift advance, grabbing control of major PLO strongholds, cutting off the guerrillas from rear support units and bypassing pockets of resistance for future containment. The attack was divided into three fronts: the western or coastal front, the eastern front and the central front.

The coastal attack began on Sunday with a combined land and sea assault on the fishing port of Tyre, which was encircled by nightfall. Tyre, about 12 miles from the Israeli border, has a permanent population of about 20,000, primarily Moslem Shiites, and about as many Palestinian refugees in three camps. About 1,500 PLO terrorists, mainly from the Fatah group, were located in this important PLO logistics and communications center.

The central front forces' chief objective was to quickly secure the Nabatiye-Arnoun Heights region. This was considered integral to the success of the entire operation. This objective was accomplished on the first day and attention was turned to Beaufort Castle, a prerequisite for successful progress on the eastern front.

Beaufort Castle, an 800-year-old Crusader fortress, is about two miles from Metulla, Israel. Sitting atop a 1,500-foot mountain, it controls the road to Damascus, Tyre and Sidon, and has strategic importance to the Christian enclave of Maj. Saad Haddad, Free Lebanon (see "Lebanon on $3.17 a Day," SOF, August '82). The assault on Beaufort began early on the second day of Operation Galilee. An elite unit of the Golani Brigade, under cover of night, fought their way into the

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using massed armor and airpower to blow away everything in their path, thereby minimizing their casualties.

One thing of note was their superb logistics, accomplished largely by helicopters after the first days. At night in Metulla on the Lebanese border you could watch streams of trucks snaking across the plains. As soon as light came, the choppers roared in endless succession up the valley, cargo dangling below. Israeli soldiers said that supply went perfectly.

Also of interest — although I didn't see it myself — were reports that large numbers of Syrian tanks in the Bekaa had been hit on the turrets by something that ruined them badly; in fact it was said that the crews began abandoning their vehicles for fear of whatever it was. The turret-hits sound like precision-guided "intelligent" weapons like the U.S. Assault Breaker and WAAM (Wide-area Anti-Armor Munitions.)

The general idea is that some vehicle — a rocket, for example — flies over a concentration of armor and ejects — on parachutes or otherwise — small "submunitions." By means of millimeter-wave sensors, IR, TV or other means, and with the aid of microcomputers, the submunitions go for the tops of tanks. Ours are not supposed to be working yet. Whether the Israelis developed their own technology, or got hold of ours somehow, is not known.

Israeli troops carried the usual Uzis, Galils, and M16s. They used a lot of U.S. armor and M113 APCs, as well as half-tracks and old British armor. Confirmation is hard to come by, but it is very likely that captured SAM-6s and T-72 Soviet tanks are now in the U.S laboratories.

4) The PLO. A lousy, ragtag bunch of half-assed guerrillas. In Hasbayah, in the eastern military sector, I went through a school made into a PLO headquarters. It was littered with RPG-7s, banana clips, demolition caps and M16 brass left by an incoming Israeli. There were the usual pictures of Marx and Lenin everywhere as well as macho-man photos of PLO guys with AKs. It looked more like a hippie's den than a barracks. In garages and villas I saw crates of ZSU-23-4 ammo marked in Russian, the guns themselves all burned out by the roadside, as well as a lot of older Soviet AA guns mounted on pickup trucks.

5) Other observations. On a rural stretch of road between Beirut and the Lebanese border, I had a flat tire. The guy standing on the other side of the road with his wife, Kathy, was Jim Morris of SOF. This hasn't got much to do with the war, but it's what I've come to expect of this magazine. My favorite memory of the whole war was driving down from the hills into Beirut and almost running into a huge, gleaming white wall of urinals stacked by a warehouse. Must have been a thousand of them, piled up and shining like the Andes in winter.

LEFT: U.S.-made Sikorsky CH-53 becomes resupply workhorse of advancing Israeli military. BOTTOM: M113 APCs carried thousands of Lebanese Christian Militia to battle, such as these members of Saad Haddad's force from southern Lebanese borderlands. Photos: Rick Venable LOWER RIGHT: Stylized Lenin and Socialist-Realist depictions of "workers" decorate covers of communist tracts found in captured office of Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine. Photo: Jim Morris

castle, which was defended by 50 terrorists. By morning the castle flew the flag of Israel. The leader of the commando unit, Maj. Guni Harnik, was killed in the raid.

The eastern or southern front forces operated in the Bekaa Valley, and along the slopes of Mt. Hermon. Beginning at Metulla, Israeli troops crossed the Litani River into Fatahland, a PLO stronghold since 1969. This front was perhaps the most difficult for the Israelis to master because of the terrain. Contained between the Lebanon Mountains to the west and the Anti-Lebanon Mountains to the east (which form the boundary between Syria and Lebanon), the valley could be well-defended by terrorists hidden in terraces, orchards and hills. Fierce fighting continued on the eastern front along the Hasbaya-Kaoukaba line throughout the six-day encounter.

The coastal front attack force continued northward to Sidon, and in a pincer movement, attacked this major PLO stronghold from both the north and south. It fell by the end of the second day. Sidon is the third largest city in Lebanon and is approximately 30 miles from Israel and Beirut. It has a population of 150,000, one-half of whom are Palestinians. Approximately 1,500 guerrillas were believed to be positioned there. An important supply, headquarters and training area, Sidon was integral to Israel's victory. From Sidon, the Israelis continued up the coast to Damour, a Maronite Christian town eight miles south of Beirut.

Syria avoided contact with the Israelis until the third day of conflict, and on the fourth day, Israel and Syria engaged in the biggest air battle between the two in over a decade. The Syrians, equipped with Soviet-made MiGs, were no match for the Israelis in the sky. Flying American-made F-15s and F-16s, the Israelis downed at least 82 Soviet MiGs or other aircraft and destroyed all 19 Soviet-supplied Syrian SAM-6 missile sites implanted in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley; no Israeli jets were downed.

The Syrians did somewhat better on land, but were still outmatched by the Israelis. Despite having the newest Soviet T-72 tanks, the Syrians were unable to stem the flow of the Israeli forces toward Beirut.

Israel did not want war with the Syrians, no one in Syria was excited about war with Israel, and the United States wanted to avoid embroiling the Soviets in the conflict. A U.S.-negotiated ceasefire was agreed upon by Syria and Israel on the sixth day.

By then, the coastal, eastern and central fronts had successfully completed their attacks and converged on the outskirts of Beirut. By this time, the United States had exerted enough pressure on its errant Israeli ally to prevent an all-out attack on the entrenched PLO. West Beirut was held captive by the Israelis for more than eight weeks of shelling and rocket exchange, broken by intermittent ceasefires, before the PLO was finally evacuated during the last weeks of August.

Clearly, Israel won a significant military battle. The armed PLO have been moved from their northern border; they defeated the Syrians in a decisive air battle and demonstrated an awesome military force to the Arab world. Politically, however, they may have paid a high price, that of unwavering U.S. support for future operations.

SOF on the Road From Beaufort to Beirut

by Jim Morris

MiG tail bears hand-painted Syrian insignia; brush marks were visible along with operating instructions and warnings in English. Tail section probably came from MiG 23. Photo: K.E. Evans-Morris

THE Israeli tank lay about forty feet off the winding mountain road, its track blown off by an anti-tank mine. That should have told me something.

There is a particular mindset you need for a combat operation, but we were a day behind the point of Operation Peace for Galilee and I felt perfectly safe. We were stopped in the middle of a dun-colored column of tanks and APCs; the mountains were beautiful, the air crisp and clean. What's to worry?

Deciding that SOF would like a close-up of what this particular mine might do to this particular tank, I stepped over a piece of engineer's tape to get a photograph of it.

"Jim, stop!" Bill Gross yelled to me as he ran down the road, Uzi slapping against his side, looking like the Incredible Hulk in his flak jacket. "There are anti-personnel mines out there. We had to send another vehicle out to retrieve the crew." Bill moved from Minneapolis to Tel Aviv a few years ago to go into the diamond business. He's a lieutenant in the Israeli reserve, called back for the Galilee operation.

After Gross pulled me out of the minefield, we were still stalled in the road, waiting for a Caterpillar tractor to smooth out a bend that two days of tank columns had made impassable.

I climbed up a dirt bank and scrambled onto an APC. The infantry squad that went with it lounged with the insolent idleness of young soldiers with nothing to do but bitch and make bum jokes while they waited for the order to move out. Thoroughly bored, they made me immediately welcome, and showed me their vehicular-mounted machine guns and personal weapons.

"What newspaper do you work for?" one of the GIs inquired in careful classroom English. Almost everyone in Israel speaks some English.

"*Soldier of Fortune*," I replied. "It's a military magazine." A couple of them brightened. SOF isn't sold in Israel, but all of them had heard of it, and a few had read it while visiting relatives in the United States.

"Are you getting a good story? one collegiate-looking blond kid asked.

I laughed and told him that I had arrived in Israel 3 June — three days before Operation Galilee had begun — to do a story on Israeli airborne training. "This is a bonus."

Finally the road was cleared, and we drove on, first to Nabatiye, then on to Beaufort Castle.

Nabatiye had been a major southern base for the PFLP (Popular Force for the Liberation of Palestine), a radical PLO faction led by Dr. George Habash, a physician who prefers killing to healing. For seven years the PFLP had occupied Nabatiye. The people still spoke of them with fear, recalling forced evictions, looting, rapes and senseless killings. The Israelis hadn't shelled much in Nabatiye; they didn't have to. The PFLP hauled ass before they appeared. The Israelis were greeted by open shops, fresh fruit and vegetable vendors, and smiling people, some said for the first time in years.

The Israelis captured three times as much ammo as their own intelligence estimates had indicated. In Nabatiye, I saw cache after cache of it, in houses and garages that the inhabitants had been driven from. As in Tyre and Sidon, the entire town was an ammo dump. It made me wonder how much of the damage to the cities was caused by secondary explosions of PLO ammo.

I also saw plenty of Marxist propaganda left behind on PFLP bookshelves, with the hammer and sickle and pictures of Lenin, Marx and Ho prominently displayed. And Palestinian magazines with ads for American cigarettes.

The first major objective of the operation was Beaufort Castle, for years the symbol of PLO domination of southern Lebanon. It towers above all the surrounding terrain. From the square, jagged peaks of Beaufort, on a clear day you can see the Litani River, Nabatiye, Marjayoun and the Israeli cities of Metulla and Quirat Shemona, which would be a snap to hit with Katyushas. The FO and fire-direction functions can all be handled by the gunner.

The mountain on which the castle sits is so steep that firing down the slopes from the castle is like shooting fish in a barrel. With enough food, ammo and water, a well-trained and motivated squad could defend it forever against anybody.

In Beaufort's 800-year history, with the exception of a couple of starve-outs and a negotiated peace, it had never been taken. The Israelis took it on the second day, at the price of six KIA.

Staring down the slopes from its summit, I asked Bill Gross in unmitigated awe, "Who did this?"

SOF TRIUMVIRATE

SOF reporters go and do as a matter of course. Jim Morris was in Lebanon last year for SOF (see "Our Man in Beirut," November, December '81, and "Bye-bye, Beirut," January '82) and happened to be in Israel on another SOF assignment at the outset of the recent conflict. SOF also sent Rick Venable, a former Marine who is now a war correspondent, to Lebanon when the war broke out.

Last spring, the magazine assigned Donna DuVall, senior editor of *Survive* Magazine, to Beirut to report on the Solidarity for Lebanon Conference, sponsored by the Lebanese Forces. The conference was attended by 135 journalists and government representatives from 16 nations and was chaired by LF leader, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated 14 September. The background material DuVall gathered while in Lebanon from 30 March to 9 April and her continuing study of the war since her return enabled her to analyze what Israel's invasion of Lebanon means. This analysis gives an overall perspective to Morris's and Venable's on-the-scene reports from Lebanon.

—M.L. Jones

"A two-hundred-man commando unit of the Golani Brigade, one of our best units," he answered. "Heliborne to the mountain's base, then in a night assault, straight up the hill. It took from one to seven to do it. Night operations are a speciality of ours. The Palestinians don't like them and they aren't very good at them."

Only a highly trained and disciplined force could have done it at night. If the slope had been ten degrees steeper it would have been a cliff.

Tyre and Sidon were shot up extensively. In Sidon, a PLO terrorist academy was found in the underground floor of a United Nations-administered vocational school, complete with cutaway models of weapons and bombs, and a dormitory set up like a barracks, with uniforms in wall lockers and double-decker bunks.

There is a large discrepancy over the civilian casualty figures in Sidon and Tyre. The International Red Cross's initial estimates were 1,541 deaths (no differentiation between civilians and terrorists) in Tyre and Sidon alone, and 300,000 homeless in all of southern Lebanon. In contrast, Israeli estimates are 450 civilian fatalities in the two cities and no more than 20,000 homeless in southern Lebanon.

It was not until the Israelis surrounded west Beirut on 8 June that reporters were allowed to catch up to the actual combat. Even then their policy demanded that we be back in Israel by nightfall. Though this policy was designed, no doubt, to ensure our safety as well as for censorship purposes, the practical effect was to send us in rented cars (not insured outside Israel) in hell-bent-for-leather convoys each morning and evening over rutted, shell-pocked highways through the blasted, shattered cities of Sidon, Tyre and Damour to Beirut and back. It's hard to tell which was more dangerous, the traveling or the war. CBS alone lost five Peugeot 504s; one was run over by a tank, another hit by a PLO rocket.

Our first day in Beirut was a breeze: We had a gourmet lunch at Emil's, atop a high hill overlooking the city, and watched artillery and rockets exchanged between east and west Beirut.

On the second day, we took some incoming nearby. It wasn't registered on us — it's hard to register on an unarmed personnel carrier (Subaru 1300) going flat-out on a winding mountain road — but shells came within meters of the car.

On the third day, the incoming held your attention, and there was machine-gun fire about two blocks away. Driving out was the worst, with the incoming very close. On the last hill, overlooking the city, the air was shattered by the crack of outgoing 155s; then there was a noise as though the sky were made of silk and had suddenly been ripped from horizon to horizon. We stopped.

In the distance, we heard a muffled *whoom, whoom* and two grey puffs billowed out of the dark haze that overlay the Burj Al Barajneh Palestinian camp, just north of the airport.

Usually referred to as a refugee camp, it could just as accurately be called Ft. Burj Al Barajneh.

We got out of the car and walked to a shelled apartment house on the point of the hill. A couple of guys with a BC (Battery Commander) scope sat on a third-floor balcony, adjusting the fire. I gradually became aware of a cracking roar overhead that swept from the south up the Mediterranean coast and then turned into a high keening shriek over the airport.

The sound of anti-aircraft fire came drifting up from the valley ... *pom-pom-pom-pom ... pom-pom-pom-pow.*

A series of loud crumps followed as the bombs hit, and the shriek ascended and disappeared. For all that we could see of the airplanes, we might as well have been listening to the radio, but there were bright flashes coming from the center of the smoky haze. Twice there were ballooning orange and black secondary explosions.

Ten minutes of dead silence followed. Way below the smoke drifted. Then it began again, and after that, once more. The papers the next day did not mention the secondary explosions.

Did the Israelis intend from the beginning to go all the way into Beirut? I am convinced that the original objective was to go no farther than the stated 25 miles into Lebanon, just far enough to move the PLO from rocket range of Israel's northern settlements.

But they rolled over the Palestinian resistance like a Cadillac over a cardboard box. Finally it was just too easy not to go all the way to Beirut. ☆

ABOVE: Israeli soldier guards Lebanese street from balcony with standard-issue 5.56mm Galil. RIGHT: Baptized with blood of millenia, Beaufort Castle now in hands of Crusader-state descendant: modern Israel. Photos: Rick Venable

BLUE FORCE BLAST

SOF's Kokalis Observes Tank Exercise at Ft. Irwin

Tanks stalk imaginary enemy through dust clouds and sun in live-fire exercise.

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

THE M60A1 main battle tank is well liked by the U.S. Army and USMC crews who use it. It came as no surprise, therefore, that my article attacking the M85 .50-caliber heavy machine gun mounted in the cupola of this tank (see "Full Auto," SOF, April '82) engendered the wrath of more than a few of the M60A1's admirers.

The M85's most astute defender was none other than SFC Richard M. Wagner, one of the Army's most-senior master gunners. SFC Wagner is now stationed with the 1st Battalion, 73rd Armor at Ft. Irwin, Calif. The primary mission of the 1st/73rd is as a unit with the National Training Center's OPFOR (opposing forces) — a thousand-man organization designed, equipped and trained to replicate a Soviet motorized rifle regiment (see "The Russians Are Here," SOF, July '82).

However, the battalion also has its mission as U.S. Army tankers. Sgt. Wagner trains the battalion in tank gunnery, tactics and maintenance. Using the M60A1 tank, one of the battalion's nine platoons receives Blue Force live-fire training under Wagner's expert tutelage each month.

In order to rebut my contentions about the M85, Wagner invited me to observe and participate in a Blue Force training exercise. Never one to pass up an opportunity to hear the sustained, raucous music of a machine gun, watch arcing tracers in the night, smell and taste the acrid burning of ball powder, and bust a few rapid-fire caps myself, Wagner found me on the doorstep of the battalion's S3 building almost before I had Public Affairs Office clearance.

The morning after I arrived, following a hearty breakfast of S.O.S. in the HQ mess hall, I found myself at 0600 bouncing down the road in a deuce-and-a-half toward the tank range deep within the Mojave Desert. The military 2½-ton truck has changed little over the last 20 years. Apparently built without springs or with a suspension system designed to withstand a 100-ton load, every pebble on the road surface is magnified a thousand times and translated screaming through each bone, muscle and sinew in the human body. Our driver, SSgt. Rudy Acuna, also from the S3 operations and training section, seemed totally oblivious to both the pain

ABOVE: M60A1 slews through turn in desert dust; modern tanks will engage on the move.
LEFT: Obsolete U.S. APC becomes target for modern armor. Red star-bedecked hulk shows clean holes of high-velocity sabot rounds and irregular, burnt perforations from HEAT shells.

and my ever-increasing groans. We arrived at the range to find the five tanks of the 3rd Platoon of Company C just finishing their prep-to-fire and bore-sighting procedures, started the day before.

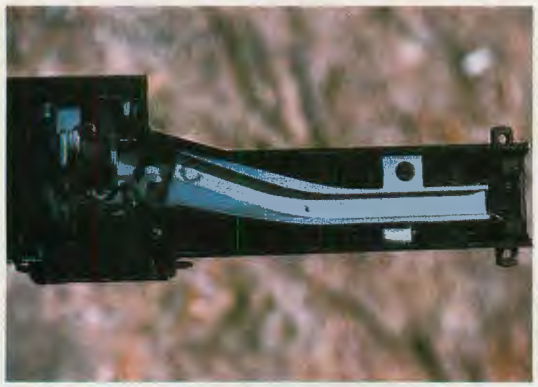
The M60A1 carries a 105mm British-designed main gun. This high-velocity tank cannon uses a rifled tube and vertical breech. There are three methods by which this weapon can be fired. During the day and at twilight, the gun can be fired with the Primary Direct Fire Control system (PDFC), which is tied into the tank's M13A2 ballistic computer and is mechanically coupled to the tank commander's coincidence rangefinder, or by means of the 105D telescope. Night vision is provided by a non-ballistic reticule passive sight which is also slaved to the PDFC. Wagner much prefers the 105D optical sight, feeling it is more reliable in all situations with a high pucker factor, but endorses and teaches both. The M13A2 is subject to the usual human error associated with computer systems (garbage in, garbage out) and mechanical failure of its intricate linkage. However, using the 105D telescope requires skill and much practice. (Sorry, Fort Knox.)

Three types of ammunition were used during the Blue Force exercise: TPDS-T (target practice disgarding sabot-tracer), HEAT-TPT (high explosive anti-tank — target practice tracer) and HEP-TPT (high explosive plastic — target practice tracer). The 105mm sabot rounds that I fired as gunner leave the muzzle at a screaming 4,850 fps. It was difficult to come down from the high produced by scoring four out of five direct hits on tanks more than 1,800 meters away. Not too bad for an *earth pig*, as I was continually called by the 3rd Platoon *tread-heads*.

But, the object of my greatest attention was, of course, the much disputed M85 .50-caliber machine gun. When we arrived at the range, one of the M85s was still out of service from the evening before. A badly ruptured case had resulted in a Class 3, or Severe, stoppage, one which would require an armorer's attention.

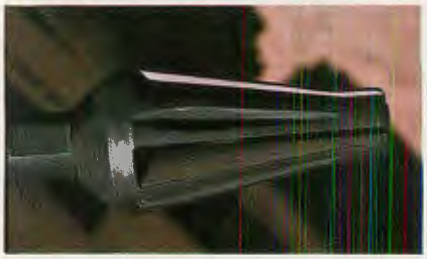
Wagner insists that many of my criticisms of the M85 were at least 10 years out of date. For example, spring returns on the feed assembly have not caused extreme bolt friction problems in 12 to 13 years. Furthermore, the firing pin protrusion has not presented a problem in more than a decade because of updated machining and measuring techniques. Wagner says the bolts themselves never broke, only the retaining pin. The problem of unequal bolt loads was not a function of the locking lug recesses, but rather the rivets on the first few thousand M85 receivers produced. They loosened, causing receiver width expansion. The barrel

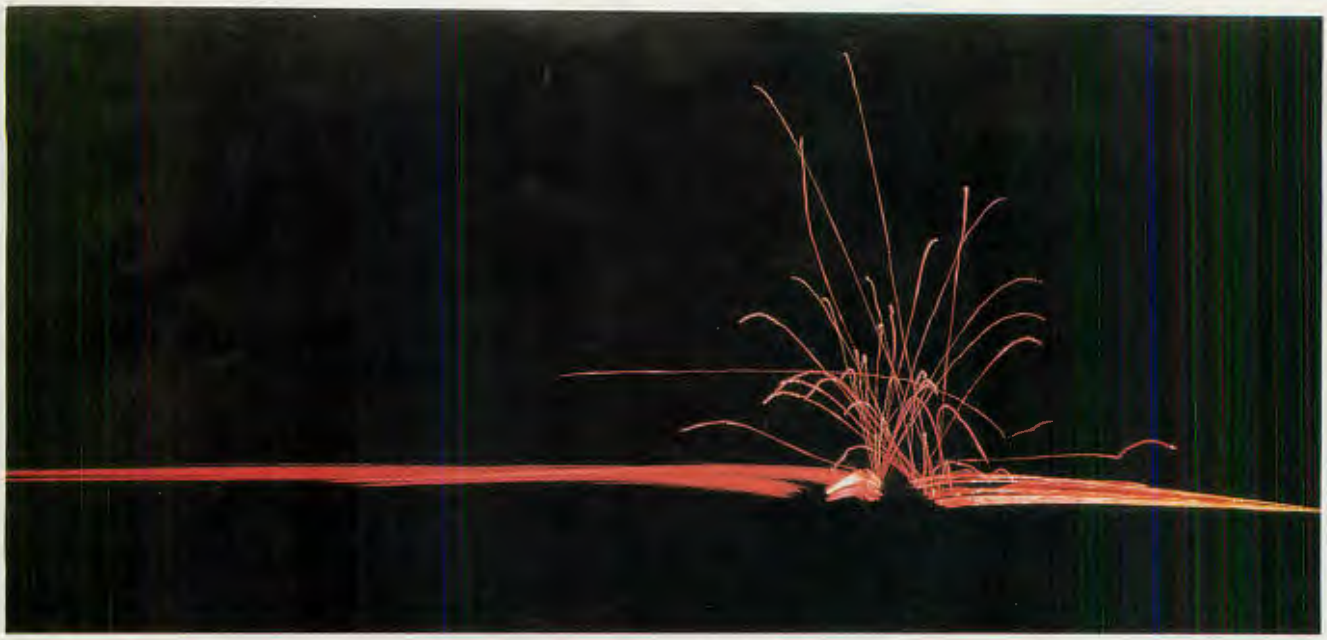
ABOVE: .50-caliber shootoff — Specialist Kasey fires M2 from M106 while SFC Richard M. Wagner pulls rank, racing by in M60A1, ready to turn M85 on rock'n'roll.



ABOVE: Outside of M85 backplate group with solenoid plunger and trigger.

UPPER LEFT: Close-up of M240 feed cover. Note similarity to that of U.S. Army's new M249 SAW. UPPER RIGHT: Machined feed block of FN MAG shows descent from German WWII MG 42. RIGHT: Distinctive M85 pierced conical flash suppressor. LOWER RIGHT: Spring, rod and sleeve of M85 HMG bolt buffer group.





extension would then expand, allowing uneven bolt loads which eventually sheared the retaining pin. The M85 will often function even with a broken retaining pin. I also originally stated that the M85 was periodically taken out of its wraps, carefully cleaned and lubricated, and put away. This is not true, as a normal gunnery exercise fired two to four times a year will result in the expenditure of 5,000 to 6,000 rounds per gun.

In addition, the Israelis did not reject the M85, but the cupola on which it is mounted. They replaced the commander's cupola with a low-profile "Israeli-mount" double-clamshell hatch and the M85 with the M60D MG in cal. 7.62mm NATO. The Israeli modification of the M60 tank is no longer classified, as I had stated. More than 50 percent of our Army National Guard's M48A5 tanks have now incorporated this modification.

Finally, Wagner took exception to my assertion that the M85 will not function in dry or dusty environments without excessive lubrication. He claims the only areas requiring lubrication are the bolt grooves of the barrel extension and sometimes, in desert climates, the left side of the feed and ejector assembly (to the right of the two feed holding pawls). Yet there was a one-gallon container of oil at the ammo point. One of the tankers blithely told me it was for lubing the M85. The specimen I fired appeared to be well saturated with oil, but the weapon had been uncleaned during three days of firing out in the field.

But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the "forgiving bitch," as the tankers fondly call her, did quite well, thank you. We fired many thousands of rounds through the platoon's

ABOVE: 1st/73rd practices for Independence Day with four M60A1s firing .50-caliber tracer. LOWER RIGHT: Identifiable by absence of fins, 4.2-inch M30 mortar rounds ready for firing. BELOW: Field-stripped FN MAG on tank deck.

ABOVE: Hatch-backed M113 APC becomes M106A1 Mortar Carrier.

M85s. We had one Class 2, or Clearable, stoppage during the night exercises. The tank commander cleared it in a few minutes. I personally experienced two Class 1, or Immediately Clearable, stoppages, a result, according to Wagner, of my attempts to fire short, three- to four-round bursts. Picking up the tempo to the 10-round bursts recommended for this weapon, I encountered no further malfunctions. I am still at a loss to explain why the M85 cannot fire short bursts without jamming (possibly the result of a well-worn driving rod spring).

The M85 can be fired using a 7x daylight optical sight, an 8x non-ballistic reticule passive night sight, or from the hip, so to speak, as the tank commander makes aiming adjustments by observation of the tracer impact. The tracer is linked in a ration of one in five with AP.

The entire Blue Force exercise was assisted by the mortar platoon of the 1st Battalion's Combat Support Company. Using 4.2-inch mortars mounted in the M106A1 Mortar Carrier (a modified version of the M113A1 APC), SSgt. French and his men enthusiastically dropped several hundred rounds of assorted WP (White Phosphorus), Illumination and HE (High Explosive) down their tubes and exactly on the targets as called for by SFC Wagner and the firing platoon sergeant, SSgt. Tiffany.

Sgt. French and his platoon were also served up as Wagner's sacrificial lambs on the final day of the exercise. Now, you just don't get to be one of the Army's most-senior master gunners without being more than a little sly and cunning. While out in the field, French was informed by Wagner that he had obtained some Browning-belted .50-caliber ammo and that French should have his M2 Heavy Barrels trucked out to the range so that the track commanders could "get a little practice."

So there we are. Wagner standing next to the cupola of the M60A1 with a Cheshire-cat grin on his face, waiting for the big M85/Ma Deuce shoot-out, while French scurries about trying to get two of his four M2 HBs, just out of the cosmoline and unfired.

Dust begins to settle after muzzle blast whips desert into clouds.

Text & Photos
by John Metzger

Big Bucks & Risks on the Oil Frontier

ROUGHNECK

The roughneck lives out here. It's a place where a man can stretch his elbows out as far as he can see — and come to peace with himself. And it's also a place where a man can make a lot of money.

Floor hands on Manning Rig No. 10 throw chain. Roughnecks need to know where *not* to be at all times.

LIKE a thunderclap, an unexpected blast of wind slammed the derrick. The drill pipe jolted the derrick man, stunning him momentarily as he dangled over the well hole. The safety belt around his waist tightened instantly. He looked down. Catching his breath, he gestured to his crew mates: "I'm okay."

The wind picked up again, whistling across the desert. The derrick's windscreen shuddered, glimmering soft orange in the early morning light. The midnight shift was over.

Joe, the derrick man, stepped off the ladder and let out a sigh of satisfaction as he unfastened the safety belt. Gray paste clung to his beard where the pipe had grazed him.

"Pipe smacked me in the face," he said happily, "but the wind got my head cleared out. I feel great."

"Well, good," said Mike, one of the floor hands. "Now it's my turn to go up."

The company truck had dropped its driveshaft on the way to work that

BACK TO SCHOOL

Most roughnecks have been around rigs all their lives, and naturally fall into the job. Others migrate to the oil fields and search for work — usually finding it after spending some nights outside. Another road to employment is to go to school.

Many men who find work on a rig have never seen one before, and they can get killed at it. Robert Prock of Texas A&M University and his associates in the oil business wanted to eliminate this hazard. The chances of injury or death could be drastically reduced if a man received hands-on training with rig equipment before he went on the job. This concept has developed into a working program: a rig-crew training school, which began as a combined effort of the Abilene, Texas, Petroleum Industry Council (part of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce) and the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC), a chapter of which was set up in Abilene to start and promote it. The school is located near the Texas Instrument Plant in Abilene, and has its own rig on the premises.

Students take turns at different jobs: floor hand, derrickman, driller. The course costs $600 and lasts for six weeks — living expenses not included. The Windsor Hotel in Abilene lets rooms for $200 a month. A cheap apartment goes for $175. Food is reasonable, and gas is cheaper than most places around the country. One really needs to have his own car, unless he sleeps on the classroom floor and eats from the lunch wagon every day.

As for the course, it is $600 well spent. After two weeks spent in the classroom studying instructional texts prepared by the University of Texas Petroleum Extension Service, it's outside for hands-on training on the rig. Students are given a chance to apply for job interviews during the school with the aid of the IADC directory. I attended the second session, and after five weeks, four enterprising students already had jobs.

The first session of the new school ended in November 1981 and had 21 graduate. All were offered jobs after completing the course when drilling company representatives were invited to watch the students do their thing. Some didn't accept the offer — they were after a job in another area, or a job overseas. But they now had hands-on training, and they knew that this experience would be in demand somewhere.

The rig-crew training school does not teach offshore drilling techniques. Its primary focus is to qualify students to work as floor hands on land-based rigs, but the big advantage is that a guy can familiarize himself with the rig, and get the safety concepts down pat — as in Airborne training. Safety-conscious reactions become second nature. When done with his education, the roughneck can look for the work he wants with confidence. The school is planning to offer a driller's course as well.

Greg Strickland has been a roughneck for years, and now teaches his trade at the school. "The class is an effective way to solve an old problem," said Strickland. "A lot of guys come to a rig, and they've never seen one before. They are put to work, and no one has much time for supervision, so this new fellow can easily get hurt or killed before he gets to know the rig — what it does and what it can do to you. The school familiarizes the students safely, under supervision, so when they get on the job, they'll have the edge. They won't get hurt in a situation where they might have gotten hurt without the prior hands-on training. The school gives the students that second sense before they get on the job."

The roughneck lives close to danger all the time. But the more he knows his job, the safer he is. The school provides prospective roughnecks the chance to start out on the right foot.

For our readers who are interested in working the rigs, SOF suggests you go back to school first, for safety's sake. Contact the Rig-Crew Training School at the Texas A&M University System, Texas Engineering Extension Service, P.O. Box 2961, Abilene, TX 79604. Phone: (915) 698-0981.

— J.M.

morning, and they had to wait in the cold for Ken Rens, the foreman, to take them up the muddy road to the rig location — four-wheel drive with four chains. Every day.

"I was ready to go up the derrick first thing this morning," said Joe, "and not getting to do it when I was ready made me just want to say, 'Fuck it, I'll walk home.' (I'd be walking all day.) But the derrick — I love it. Some guys don't use the safety belt — figure they can grab on to something. I'm glad I had it on today."

These men are called roughnecks. They tap America's oil fields on land and sea, and bring oil and gas out of the ground. It's a tough job, and the roughnecks are proud of what they are doing. The American frontier still exists, and they are part of it, living a life like that of the pioneers who crossed the same deserts and mountain ranges, paving the way for a more comfortable life. Our land is still graced with vacant vast expanses, untouched by man except where derricks dot the desert, scrape the sky and drill down thousands of feet to reap the earth's resources.

The roughneck lives out here. It's a place where a man can stretch his elbows out as far as he can see — and come to peace with himself. And it's also a place where a man can make a lot of money.

There are different drilling companies and different rigs, drilling for oil and gas. Each has different work schedules and pay grades. I worked on what is called a work-over rig, self-contained on a truck, that sets up to perforate and fracture the hole after the larger rig is through drilling the hole and lining it with pipe casing. The shifts on our rig — Twin Arrow Drilling Rig No. 311 — were eight hours, six days a week with

Derrick man's office. Pipe is racked behind derrick man, after being released from yellow tongs. Note safety line attached to waist.

Roughnecks start work the morning after light snowfall. Work-over rig is near Rangely, Colo.

Sundays off, but the crew averaged around 72 hours a week. Weekly paychecks were between $400 and $800, depending on a man's job and seniority. Pay varies around the country in different oil patches. A man working as a floor hand, or "worm," in the Red Desert of southwestern Wyoming can start as high as $10 per hour, and put in 14-hour days. The Red Desert is one of those places where Grand Marnier is *not* served after dinner. It is a lonely land untamed, a vacant desert stretching empty from horizon to horizon. Civilization is restricted to gas stations on Interstate 80. Here, the drills can go as deep as 25,000 feet.

That's a lot of pipe to shove into the ground, and one rig can stay at the same location for six months or more before moving on. Winters are rough, and just *moving* is a job in itself. The shallower the hole, the less time the rig will be there. After the well is drilled and lined with casing, it's time to move on to another location — determined by drilling company geologists and engineers.

The entire rig is taken apart and moved to another spot, which may be hundreds of miles away. The roughnecks travel with their rigs, and either live in motels at the company's expense or in trailers at the location for the duration of the drilling. It's a chance to see different parts of the country, and become a "local" at the town watering hole until it's time to move on.

"I worked near Baggs, Wyo., for a couple of months when the company got a contract up there." said Ken. "We stayed in a motel and I drove home on weekends to be with my family. Got in a lot of overtime."

Roughnecking on the work-over rigs is "cleaner" than on the drilling rigs, and many men prefer it. But Monty, the driller on my rig, preferred the big derricks in the main oil patch around Rangely, Colo.: "We roughnecks is a crazy and dirty bunch. It ain't no fun unless you get covered with oil" — which often happens on the big rigs in a patch with a large reserve beneath the surface. (Contrary to popular belief, a "gusher" is not a welcomed occurrence.) But the big rigs are dangerous.

Like bullets, the moving parts on a rig pay little heed to human flesh. A chain can cut a finger off like butter, and a stand of pipe spitting its way out of the hole is not what you would call a forgiving piece of equipment.

There is the dubious practice of "throwing chain," in which a crewman wraps a pipe in chain, then throws it around the next stand of pipe going in the hole. Links of chain fly crazily in all directions, and you have to know where *not* to be at all times.

It takes a special breed to be a roughneck; it certainly isn't for everyone. A fellow looking for a few fast bucks may come up to a rig without ever having seen one before, and start working as if he were an experienced hand — and can get killed for it if he's not careful. There is a quick remedy to this safety problem, however: If a new hand appears to pay little attention to the experienced hand's advice, he will be fired — or "run off"

Continued on page 94

SOF Staffer John Metzger plays roughneck near Rangely, Colo.

It can get downright dirty on the big rigs. Roughnecks in eastern Utah watch lubricating mud flow from hole.

RAW POWER

Text & Photos by Sgt. Gary Paul Johnston

Six-pound RAW turns AR-15 into blockbuster. Armor- and masonry-penetrating rocket-propelled projectile has frag, smoke, gas and Willy Peter variants.

THE U.S. Army field manual 100-5, Operations, states: "Many areas of the world, especially Western Europe, have experienced a massive growth in built-up areas and man-made changes to the natural landscape. These changes significantly affect potential future battlefields. Avoidance of built-up areas is no longer possible. Rather, military operations in built-up areas are an integral part of combat operations and present special opportunities and challenges to commanders at all levels."

To the average ground-grunt, this means that he needs small arms that will do more than the battle rifles of the past. Tomorrow's infantryman will need weapons that will penetrate modern urban structural barriers of brick, block and reinforced concrete. The Rifleman's Assault Weapon (RAW) was designed with that modern urban battlefield in mind. The RAW has been developed by Brunswick Corporation's Defense Division in cooperation with the U.S. Army Missile Command (MICOM) and represents a radical departure from what was previously conceived as possible in an accessory to a battle rifle.

The RAW was conceived to give all riflemen the instant capability of defeating such obstacles as light armor and bunkers. It will blast a hole big enough to crawl through in eight inches of double-reinforced concrete. The surprising thing about the RAW is that, unlike most weapons of its class, it requires very little training to use. It's as simple as fixing a bayonet: The rifleman attaches the unit to his rifle, pulls out the safety pin and fires a standard ball cartridge directly at any target out to 200 meters, using standard sights. Within a quarter of a second, the RAW is rocket-propelled from its launch frame and flies straight to the target in less than two seconds with zero trajectory. That's right: no holdover, no ranging errors.

The RAW's launcher frame holds a tube which is free to rotate on bearings, and which contains rear vents, as well as two side vents which consist of two curved tubes that are at opposing right angles to the axis of the main tube. The projectile fits into the main tube and up against part of the main launcher support. This portion of the support has a hole drilled through it which connects with the muzzle sleeve. The removal of the safety pin unblocks a firing pin at the lower end of the hole where it meets the projectile body.

When the bullet leaves the muzzle of

Army Tests Urban Bunker Buster

Rifleman's Assault Weapon separate from battle rifle: light, compact, potent.

Cutaway RAW shows arming mechanism, payload and blast-directing aluminum shell.

the rifle, some of the expanding gas flows down the launcher-tube hole and through the bracket. With the safety pin removed, the gas is free to strike the firing pin, driving it into a primer in the rear of the projectile and starting the rocket motor. As gas is expelled from the rocket, it is directed through the two right-angled tubes, causing the main tube and projectile to spin 60 revolutions per second. At launch, the gasses are directed through the rear vents in the main tube and diverted outward, away from the shooter, similar to a muzzle brake. Because the RAW launcher can be removed and does not alter the rifle's main function, the rifleman is able to protect himself at all times.

The spinning of the RAW gives it gyroscopic stability in flight. The axis of the round ball is inclined several degrees to provide one-g (acceleration of gravity) of upward thrust. This creates the level flight during the rocket motor's 200-meter life.

The RAW warhead is armed through a conventional thrust/spin mechanism and, upon impact, the front part flattens, giving a "squash head" effect. Its applications are nearly limitless. It is a rifle munition with light artillery power.

"It will destroy any vehicle," said Baker, "up to and including all light armor." I asked him about tanks. "Of course we anticipate its use against tanks, but it has yet to be proven in that area."

Other, more specialized payloads such as fragmentation, smoke, target-marking, white phosphorus and CS grenades can also be incorporated into the system. The RAW weighs six pounds, three of which are payload, and although there is no recoil, the muzzle moves slightly upward at the instant of weight loss. Another advantage is that, unlike other man-fired rockets, the RAW can be launched from inside small enclosures with no backblast, enabling the shooter to remain undetected.

Is the RAW the answer to urban combat problems of the future? Brunswick thinks so, and the Army and Marine Corps are very interested, as are several other Free World countries. Development of the RAW began during the previous administration, however, when it was common to hear the role of the infantryman in future conflicts minimized. A 1978 cost analysis put the RAW at $100 a copy — a bargain even by 1982 standards.

by Jim Coyne

THE Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 has now become a war of prolonged, protracted struggle. In an area the size of Texas, the central communist government in Kabul and the combined military forces of the Soviet Union have failed to achieve any of their announced objectives against the Islamic-Nationalist guerrillas.

Most media analysts predicted an early collapse to the anti-communist resistance unless arms and munitions were immediately made available to the Afghan guerrillas. Although there is no evidence such deliveries have been made, the resistance continues to consolidate the steady, daily gains of the *jihad*, or holy war, now in its third year. Bolstered by faith and their determination to succeed, the guerrillas of the Afghan resistance have consistently exploited every weakness of the overextended Soviet Army.

Mujahideen freedom fighters now effectively control 90 percent of the vast, remote country. A large area — virtually the entire countryside — is denied to the central Afghan government and the armed sorties of the Soviet Union.

Photos by
Robert K. Brown
& Jim Coyne

AFGANHISTAN UPDATE

Russians Lose Battles But May Win War

Politically and militarily, the Soviets control less today than a year ago.

However, many of the "unannounced" objectives of the Soviet invasion and occupation already have taken place: construction of an advanced airbase at Shindand in western Afghanistan near the Iranian border and placement of intermediate-range SS-20 missiles. The Soviets continue to upgrade vital communications and logistical land/road links with the USSR, and have placed particular emphasis on construction of permanent barracks, radar facilities, bridges, runway extensions and P.O.L. pipelines. The Soviet Union continues to assert with brute military force its intention to forever be the "dominant partner" of Afghan politics.

The good news is: No outside power has ever been able to control Afghan politics before; it is unlikely the Russians will be able to do so now.

The immense, strategic central valleys of Afghanistan radiate outward from Kabul as do spokes from a hub.

If leadership rests in the lion's jaw,
So be it. Go, snatch it from his jaws.
Your lot shall be greatness, prestige, honor and glory.
If all fails, face death like a man.

—Hanzala of Badghis —Nishapur — ninth century A.D.

When the "logistical tail" of the Soviet Army is subtracted from the approximately 135,000 men reported present in Afghanistan (seven divisions, not counting air force personnel, KGB or MVD), only a fraction, perhaps 80,000 men, are readily available for combat. The logistical "tentacles" of the Soviet occupation force in Kabul cannot presently support troops far afield for long, nor provide security much beyond the environs of the capital. The Soviet Army of occupation in Afghanistan sits in the valley of the shadow of death. One million troops may not be equal to the task.

SOF has learned from intelligence sources that the Soviet military leaders responsible for the conduct of the invasion and occupation may have been "given a quota" of troops available for duty in Afghanistan by politicians in the Kremlin — a "not-to-be-exceeded" figure.

Wary of "endless wars of escalation," as witnessed from their unique perspective of the American military counter-insurgency campaigns in Vietnam, the Soviet military hierarchy has apparently placed an arbitrary limit on the number of troops destined for duty in Afghanistan, a "no-more, no-less" policy.

Although other geopolitical military considerations may have influenced this quota, whatever its size, the result is that Soviet troops have been, in effect, doomed to manage as best they can in the furthest, most hostile outposts from Red Square.

In the air, the vaunted Soviet Mi-24 helicopter gunship has proven vulnerable to the severe stress of sustained aerial combat and increasingly accurate ground fire. (The Mi-24 has three vulnerable points difficult to armor or protect: turbine air intakes, tail-rotor assembly and an oil tank inexplicably, but conveniently, located beneath the red star on the fuselage.)

MiGs are even more vulnerable in the mountains, both to ground fire (thin skin), and flight limitations (high altitude, low atmospheric density). The Soviet Air Force seems to lack an adequate quick-reaction tactical MiG strike capability. FACs are conspicuously absent from Afghanistan's skies.

Afghan Christmas is opening a new 12.7mm HMG still in cosmoline. Half-inch bullets must replace ATGMs and SAMs in poor, foot-borne, sandal-shod "army."

On the ground, the jagged heights, narrow defiles and sharp valleys of Afghanistan remain impervious to Soviet armor and mechanized infantry tactics. The Russians have yet to employ air-mobile infantry tactics with any measure of confidence or success. Strategic Soviet armored and mechanized infantry offensives have stalled repeatedly; decimated columns straggle back from the countryside daily.

It is difficult to trace how, or where, weapons are obtained by Afghan resistance forces. There is no evidence to suggest that the United States, or any other country, has provided substantial, direct military aid for the guerrillas. The eclectic assortment of weapons include AK-47s, some bearing Egyptian markings, others Chinese, many Soviet AKMs and old British .303 Lee-Enfields. Certainly some arms are provided directly by sympathetic governments, but it is "easier" if arms are purchased in the international arms market with group funds. There have been no large purchases or deliveries of sophisticated arms, such as SAMs or ATMs. Although an increase in the numbers of armor-piercing RPGs and AT mines is encouraging, the guerrillas continue to fight very well, with very little.

The costs of continued Soviet occupation are high — on the ground in Afghanistan, in East-West relations and in their standing in the Third World. The Soviets are involved in a classic effort to suppress what in another context they themselves might call a national liberation struggle.

Beyond the human suffering and pain of Afghanistan's war, the true tragedy remains the world's indifference to the consequences. Media attention is easily diverted; other wars vie for headlines and air-time, other tragedies occupy the moment. It is a cruel truth, not easily explained to those who wait patiently in the mountains of Afghanistan for a weapon, any weapon, with which to fight for freedom.

ABOVE: Victorious mujahideen display bolt-action SMLEs and captured AKMs atop burnt-out Russian tank. This T-54's return fire was directed at SOFers Brown and Coyne a few months before (see SOF, p. 50, November '82). BELOW: SMLEs decorated with hand-loomed web-gear, AKMs and one AK-74 (third from left, front row) were principal weapons for carrying Russian-supported Afghan Army outpost near Khost. Victors pose inside recently captured hill-top fort. Photos: Courtesy Afghan National Liberation Front.

SAS & SBS Are SOBs to Argentines

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Jim Graves & Bob Poos
Photos Courtesy of Royal Marines & Royal Marine SBS

Making good use of extreme conditions at home, members of SBS, wearing British special-forces cammies, train with Sterling-Patchett MkV suppressed-barrel SMG and Klepper Mk13 "canoe."

THE SBS and SAS, including the "San Carlos Chapter, Hells Angels," paved the way for Great Britain's successful reconquest from Argentina of the Falkland Islands last April, May and June.

Many, although certainly not all, SOF readers will be aware that the initials SBS stand for England's Royal Marine Commando Special Boat Squadron and SAS for the British Army's Special Air Service regiment. The "San Carlos Chapter, Hells Angels" consisted of men from the latter force who employed CanAm dirt bikes and Land Rovers on scouting/recon missions for the main British invasion in late May.

However, involvement in the undeclared war by British Royal Marine regulars, the SAS and SBS began almost two months before Guardsmen, Gurkhas and other British conventional troops inflicted a humiliating defeat upon poorly trained and ill-motivated Argentine teen-aged draftees. Argentine Special Forces and Marines fared little better.

The whole thing — which first looked like a comic-opera affair, but turned out otherwise — began on 2 April when Argentine Marines, some 5,000 of them, invaded the Falklands, which are located in an inhospitable area of the South Atlantic noted for its sub-zero temperatures and blizzards whipped by 100-mph-plus gales.

The stated purpose was to resolve an old Argentine/English dispute about rightful ownership of the island group, where sheep far outnumber human inhabitants.

But the real reason was an effort by Argentina's ruling military junta to restore faith in the government and shore up sagging national morale in a country inflicted with economic and other woes. What better way to do that than "to rally 'round the flag, boys," in support of a flashy military operation?

So on 2 April, Argentina, with little prior warning, threw its full weight of military might against East and West Falklands, particularly the capital, Port Stanley. For two hours, 81 Royal Marines held them off, prepared to die to the last man, if need be. But their commanding officer, Maj. Mike Norman, along with Falklands Governor and Commander-in-Chief Rex Hunt, decreed otherwise. Hunt, adorning himself in the full regalia of his office, including plumed, cocked hat, surrendered. Although he may have looked amusing in this 19th-century attire, Hunt is neither a fool nor a coward and he is no stranger to violence, being a former RAF fighter pilot and member of the British diplomatic mission in Saigon when it was overrun by Viet Cong during the Vietnamese War.

Hunt recalls that after seeing the Argentine fleet, including landing craft stuffed with troops of the invasion force, "I had come to terms with the fact that Imight not survive the night and because of that I really wasn't frightened. My wife and son had already been moved to safety."

Despite the surrender, an element of 22 British Marines made a similar brave but futile last stand on the dependency of South Georgia which lies some 800 miles southeast of Port Stanley, downing two assault helicopters and killing 10 to 15 Argentinians. But like their brothers in the Falklands proper, these men were overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers and also capitulated.

This stubborn display of British stiff upper lip should have furnished the Argentinians some idea of what lay in store for them. But it didn't. For the moment, it was all cheers and flag waving in Buenos Aires and the government of Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri suddenly achieved the popular endorsement it sought.

But flags also began waving and martial music playing in England, which seems to thrive on initial military disaster while trusting to God, Queen and Country for ultimate victory. And almost before the smoke stopped curling from the muzzles of Royal Marine rifles, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher gave the command to get back those islands, some 8,000 miles distant.

The order came as no surprise to the Marines and their SBS and the SAS, who knew they would be the first to go into action. They were ready and they must've been eager because this was to be no Northern Ireland where both had long suffered severe restraints while at the same time fighting the Irish Republican Army and desperately trying not to inflict casualties on innocent civilian bystanders — some of whom were not so innocent. This was the real thing: war against a clear-cut enemy which had attacked British territory.

Humor, honor and brains combine in SBS emblem decorating Squadron HQ.

British military planners selected Ascension Island, about halfway between England and the Falklands, as their staging area for ground and naval forces, and C-130 Hercules transports began flying equipment and men there.

Among the first were the SBS — composed of about 100 men — and troopers from the 22 SAS regiment.

Like the war itself, most SBS/SAS operations began with disaster and ended in triumph, largely due to the superb training, physical condition and discipline of the troops involved.

Their admirers are fond of calling the SBS the "hardest men in the world" and credit them with being the toughest, best-trained troops on earth. They might meet with an argument there from U.S. Marines, particularly those in Force Recon companies, and from the Army's Ranger battalions. But both the SBS and SAS did well enough in the South Atlantic to gain the respect of military observers the world over — especially in Argentina.

The SBS and SAS had a multifaceted role in the Falklands — but generally it could be divided into a reconnaissance mission (usually the SBS) and a raiding mission (usually the SAS).

Recon missions were launched to locate potential landing beaches and test the ground to determine if it was firm enough to support tracked and wheeled assault vehicles, to identify Argentine strong points, patrol routes, radar sites, mine fields and beach obstacles.

SBS recon patrols in the Falklands, usually landed by small boat, traveled light. SBS troops have a three-layered kit. The E&E (escape and evasion) kit — about which very little is known — is presumed to consist of survival devices and equipment hidden among clothing and nonsuspicious equipment. The SBS belt kit consists of handgun, knife, fishing line, water bottle, snares and food pouch. The third layer is the pack kit — extra food, dry clothing and waterproof poncho. In addition the SBS four-man half-section patrols carried M16 rifles — with the M203 grenade launcher — plastic explosives, night sights, laser "torches," which cast invisible beams on targets creating a hot spot which infrared detectors on bombs can guide in on and a small radio capable of burst transmissions. The SAS recon patrols, inserted by a variety of means including HALO (High Altitude Low Opening) parachute jumps, were similarly equipped.

Because of the nature of their mission, the SBS and SAS recon patrols avoided contact with both Argentine forces and the islanders but there were brushing contacts with stray sentries whose subsequent disappearance caused considerable concern among the Argentine garrison forces.

The raiding missions (usually handled by SAS teams but frequently with SBS units along in a recon role) were conducted to create diversions, confuse the Argentinians as to the main landing areas and to take out critical targets — air fields, radar sites, fuel and ammunition dumps.

British special forces recon team covers and searches lieutenant commander of Argentine Marines captured in contact with enemy patrol.

The British war plan called for an assault first on the South Georgia Islands, some 1,400 miles east of the Falklands, also occupied by Argentina but with light forces.

Ice-covered, wind-swept South Georgia is a harsh land even in spring. Dominated by a mountain range that has peaks up to 10,000 feet and glaciers that start at the tide line, South Georgia is sometimes facetiously called "the last place on God's earth." Appropriately enough Britain's famous Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton is buried on the island.

At least four days before the first Royal Marines from M Company, 42 Commando, came ashore, SBS and SAS recon teams were prowling on the island.

The SBS got on South Georgia first, using some of the "James Bondish" equipment and tactics the unit is famous for. The SBS recon men flew from their base in England to Ascension Island by C-130, refueled and then continued in the C-130 to a rendezvous with a British submarine somewhere well off South Georgia. The SBS men parachuted in and swam to the submarine which in turn transported them close to the island. The three four-man recon teams got on the island via Gemini inflatable landing craft.

On the night of 21-22 April, the SAS put its first men ashore. The 15-man unit from Mountain Warfare Troop of D Squadron 22 SAS choppered from the British Navy auxiliary ship *Tidespring* to Fortuna Glacier.

Conditions atop the glacier were, however, abominable — the wind was gusting at over 100 miles-per-hour and blizzard conditions prevailed — so the SAS called for an extraction. A Mark V Wessex helicopter from HMS *Antrim* picked up the team but crashed seconds later in a complete white-out. A second Wessex also crashed while trying to pick up the team. Lt. Com. Ian Stanley flew in a third Wessex, picked up the SAS and both crews and though seriously overloaded on his final trip got the lot back to the *Antrim*. Stanley received the Distinguished Service Order for rescuing the men.

Within hours of their return to the *Antrim*, the SAS decided to have another go at it, using Geminis and troops from Boat Troop D Squadron. Three of the five boats were able to reach shore but two teams found themselves in trouble when outboard motors failed because of age and inadequate maintenance. A Wessex helicopter found one of the craft and plucked its occupants from mountainous ocean swells but a search failed to locate the second missing Gemini. Its troopers managed to paddle it to the last landfall before Antarctica. Had they not, they probably would have remained frozen for all eternity in the icy wasteland of that continent. As it was, they showed enormous discipline in holding radio silence for five days — until the landings started — before calling for a rescue.

At Grytviken harbor — where the Ar-

ABOVE: HALO-equipped parachutist of Royal Marine Special Boat Squadron wears oxygen mask, 7.62mm NATO L7A1 GPMG, old-pattern camouflage wind-proof suit and Bergen rucksack hung under 'chute. BELOW: Green-bereted Royal Marine Commandos ready to land on San Carlo carry L42A1 sniper rifle and L7A1 GPMG, both in 7.62 NATO.

gentines had most of their forces — the recon teams scouted out the defenses and then set up an artillery/naval gunfire observation post manned by a Royal Artillery officer.

Although a conventional assault was planned for Grytviken, it never came off because the Argentines were frightened of the firepower the British had on hand and because of a daring raid launched by the SAS.

When the Argentine submarine *Sante Fe*, attacked and disabled by British helicopters, ran aground in Grytviken's harbor on 25 April, the SAS commander on the *Antrim* convinced Capt. Brian Young, the officer commanding operations, to let him try a surprise assault on the Argentine positions to take advantage of all the confusion caused by the precipitous "docking" of the *Sante Fe*.

Royal Marine Capt. Rodney Bell led 30 SAS men on the raid directly through an Argentine minefield. The raiding party was able to cross it because during the night the SAS/SBS recon teams ashore had cleared paths through the minefield. But the attack across mined ground so stunned the Argentine defenders that they surrendered without firing a shot.

The following day the Argentine garrison at Leith surrendered, giving the force a total of 156 Argentine soldiers and 38 Argentine civilians captured.

Meanwhile, in the Falklands, SBS and SAS recon teams, some ashore as early as 18 April, were busy collecting intelligence for the main assault.

One of the first critical targets identified by the recon teams was Argentina's grass air strip at Pebble Island, on the north side of West Falkland. Stationed at Pebble Island were Argentinian-made twin-engined Pucaras, an aircraft designed for use against infantry troops and one with quite a punch since it mounts two 20mm Hispano Suiza cannons, four 7.62mm FN machine guns — and can carry 3,300 pounds of bombs. Additional target areas on Pebble Island included ammunition and fuel stockpiles and a radar station atop 900-foot First Mountain.

The British command elected to send in a raiding party from 22 SAS, since the SAS units are better equipped for that type of bash and dash (hit and run to their American cousins) mission.

Although canoe-borne SAS men were on Pebble Island as early as 11 May, conditions in the area were so rough — high seas and gale-force winds — the actual assault was not launched until the night of 14-15 May.

The raiding party, which consisted of 45 men from 22 SAS and a naval gunfire team, left HMS *Hermes* in Westland Commando Mark 22 helicopters during a gale, to prevent the Argentines from hearing the choppers.

Let off a few miles from the air strip, the SAS party approached silently until the target was in sight and then assaulted as a destroyer walked 4.5-inch shells though the position just ahead of the SAS raiders. The actual damage was accomplished through use of plastic explosives and phosphorous grenades. The naval gunfire was intended only to keep the Argies' heads down while the SAS wired up the stores, the radar station and the 11 Pucaras stationed there. The attack was a complete success with all targets destroyed and only two SAS wounded.

In a much smaller operation, and one which the British have denied to this time, the SBS got in another spectacular score on a raid — but this one was aimed at the Argentine mainland.

On 4 May, Argentina's Capt. Augusto Cesar Vedacarratz shocked the British and the world with a one-shot, one-hit kill of the HMS *Sheffield*, a destroyer on radar-picket duty 70 miles west of the Falklands. Vedacarratz, flying a French-made Super Etendard, locked onto the *Sheffield* from more than 20 miles away and fired off an Exocet AM-39 missile. The French-made Exocet missile came in at wave-top height and nearly the speed of sound. The missile tore a hole in the ship before exploding in the control room. However, the most serious damage was done when the Exocet's unused rocket fuel triggered a fire which con-

sumed the aluminum hull, killed 20 British sailors and forced the ship to be abandoned.

The British were stunned that a single jet, launching a single Exocet missile, could sink a $23-million destroyer, which appeared only as a brief blip on the radar set of the Etendard fighter.

Vedacarratz had started his mission from Rio Gallegos Airfield in extreme southern Argentina.

The world's only hint of what exactly took place on or around 20 May came when a British Sea King helicopter crashed near Puerto Arenas, Chile.

Chile, which had a "minor" dispute with Argentina in 1979 over who owned the islands in the Beagle Channel off Tierra del Fuego, could not openly be associated with the British effort so there were some "nasty" diplomatic notes exchanged over the British intrusion of Chilean air space. The British claimed the unmarked Sea King had wandered off course in bad weather.

The "unofficial" rumor is that an SAS observation team rode the Sea King from Chile to Rio Gallegos airfield in Argentina to provide assistance to a SBS raiding party landed by boat from the diesel submarine HMS *Onyx*. The SBS party knocked out five Super Etendard jets. Thereafter Argentina took the expedient measure of not parking jets on air fields at night. Argentine jets were towed off base and parked on nearby roads, then towed back to base when a launch order was issued. It was an SAS observation unit, left to observe this reaction, which crashed in the Sea King on a return trip to Chile.

However, after three successes, the British Special Forces thereafter encountered tragedy. On 20 May, a Sea King helicopter, seeking to land 26 SAS troopers on the deck of a British ship, was hit by a bird, presumably an albatross, some of which have an eight-foot wing span. The Sea King plunged into the ocean and remained afloat only long enough for two crewmen and seven soldiers to escape. Nineteen SAS troopers perished.

By now, the British High Command planned to get down to business. The night of 20 May and morning of 21 May, a joint force of SBS/SAS launched diversion attacks on key Argentine positions, mainly on West Falkland but also against Goose Green and Darwin on East Falkland. The spoiling attacks were designed to distract the Argentines, to cover the landing at San Carlos (on the west side of East Falkland) and to make reinforcement of any position difficult.

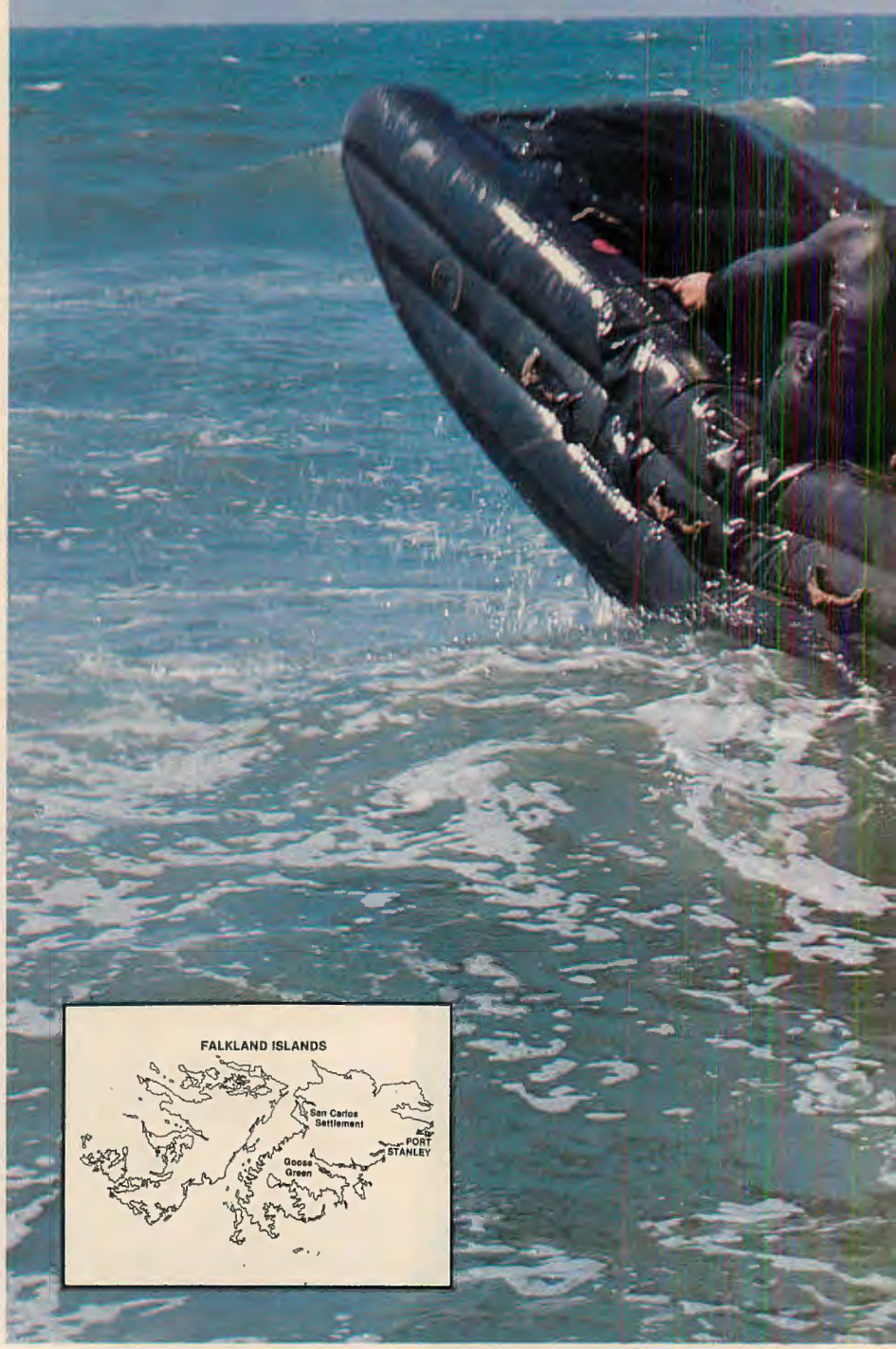
Meanwhile, SBS Marines seized a beachhead at San Carlos and silenced an Argentine observation post on Fanning Island, overlooking San Carlos. The SAS and SBS recon patrols on the beach greeted the invasion force — Marines from 40, 42 and 45 Commandoes, the 2nd and 3rd Parachute Battalions — and guided them into beachhead defensive positions.

THE BOATS OF THE SBS

by James Shortt

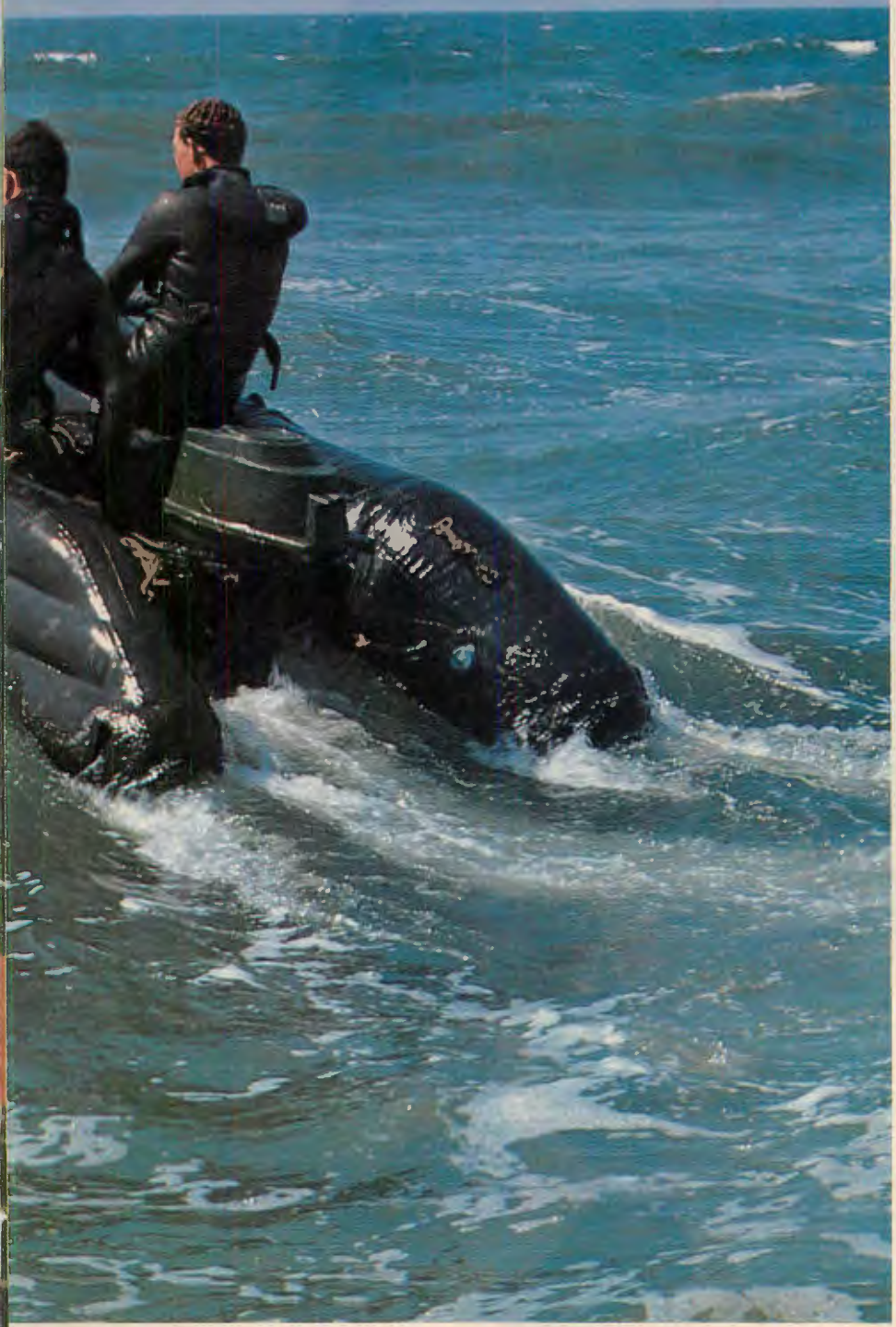
The British Royal Marine Special Boat Squadron and Special Air Service regiment boat troops employ craft ranging in size from surfboards to Landing Craft, Vehicle/Personnel (LCVP) and Landing Craft, Utility (LCU), with which practically every U.S. Marine and many soldiers are familiar. They include:

- Paddle board, known by civilians as the surfboard. Used by swimmers as a flotation aid for men and equipment in short-range work requiring silence and low visibility.
- Canoe, Klepper Mk 13, produced by the German firm of that name for the SBS. Only difference between it and a civilian version is appropriate camouflage paint. Collapsible with frame carried in one canvas bag and skin in another. Weight, 112 pounds. Supports total weight of 1,000 pounds, including two men. In use by SBS for more than 20 years, including Falklands war.
- "Kestrel," three-man collapsible. Packs in a small bag which can be attached to a parachutist's leg and released by line prior to landing.



Usually powered by a 9.5hp outboard engine dropped separately. Inflates by CO_2 cartridge popped by lanyard.

- "Gemini," made by Dunlop for the Ministry of Defense since 1953. Capacity of four fully equipped men or six swimmers. Carries four paddles but can also be powered by outboard motor of up to 40hp. Length, 15 feet, three inches; beam, six feet, three inches.
- "Rigid Raider," military version of the Boston Whaler-type sport-fishing boat. Length, 17 feet, 1½ inches; beam, seven feet, 1½ inches. Capacity of 10 equipped commandos. Powered by outboard motor of up to 140hp.
- Landing Craft, Vehicle Personnel (LCVP, British version). Length, 90 feet; beam, 22 feet, four inches; draft, two feet, four inches; twin-engined, twin rudders; weight, 13 tons; crew of three.
- Landing Craft, Utility (LCU, British version). Length, 90 feet; beam, 22 feet, four inches; draft, four feet, seven inches; weight, 90 tons; capable of deploying light armored vehicles (LAVs).



As the British conventional forces poured ashore and moved inland, the SAS and SBS Marines conducted scouting and patrol actions in front of the columns. This was when the CanAm bikes came into play, since they were well suited to the Falklands' terrain.

Once the British broke out of the beachhead the only really stiff resistance came at Goose Green, taken eventually by a savage attack by the 2nd Paras, the same unit which landed at Arnhem during World War II.

Once the garrison at Goose Green surrendered and the SAS and SBS recon patrols brought the columns closer and closer to the Argentines' main position at Port Stanley, the war became anti-climactic. Half-frozen, hungry and thoroughly frightened Argentine troops began discarding weapons and helmets in their eagerness to surrender. They probably figured they would be treated better by the Brits than by their own officers, who reportedly sought to discourage precipitate surrender by shooting to death with pistols a few of the hapless draftees. British Marines who participated in the campaign reported to SOF the capture of soldiers as young as 12, some of whom didn't even know they were scheduled to participate in the war until they arrived in the Falklands. When boarding aircraft they were told they were going to southern Argentina.

In addition to the officers trying to hold the draftees in line, British Marines reported that Argentine Special Forces troops were scattered among the draftees to enforce discipline by harsh measures. The Argie SFs had two ID cards, one military, the other indicating they were part of the secret police.

However, the harsh measures used to hold the draftees in line had little impact once the Brits overran the high positions around Port Stanley. Once the Two Sisters, Wireless Ridge, Tumbledown Mountain, Mount William and Sapper Hill fell, the Argentines were in complete retreat and white flags began to flutter around Port Stanley.

Just before the final surrender on 14 June, SBS and SAS small-unit patrols encountered one another and mistaking one another as enemy opened fire. One SBS sergeant was killed.

During the entire Falklands operation, 20 British Special Forces men met death, all in accidents rather than through enemy resistance.

Among those accepting the Argentine surrender was SAS' Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Mike Rose who reportedly amused himself during the San Carlos landing by pot-shooting at Argentine planes with an M16 while reclining in a deck chair. Fluent in Spanish and formerly in the intelligence service, he served as interpreter and negotiator for the formal Argentine surrender.

Continued on page 88

by Edgar O'Ballance

'We are the Pilgrims, Master:
We shall go always a little further:
It may be beyond that last blue mountain
barr'd with snow,
Across that angry or that glimmering Sea.

(From the SAS memorial to their dead;
22 SAS, Bradbury Lines Camp, Hereford)

Drawing: Blandford Press

WHO DARES WINS

SAS vs. Soldiers, Guerrillas and Terrorists

Elite SAS troopers train under realistic conditions. This candidate attempts smile while dragging silenced Sterling SMG, two packs, hauling-sack and flotation device ashore after swimming "water hazard" in rubber immersion suit. Photo: Courtesy United Kingdom Land Forces

LABELED by their wounded enemies as the British government's private assassination squad, members of the SAS — the Special Air Service — have been actively engaged in "covert operations" in Northern Ireland for some time, although the authorities are extremely touchy and reticent about these activities and play them down. The Provisional IRA refers to them as "black operations."

A series of sectarian killings in the province had culminated — in January 1976 — in the murder of five Catholics on one day and of 10 Protestants the next. The following day the British Prime Minister's Office announced that the SAS would be sent to South Armagh, known to British soldiers as "bandit country." They had been in Northern Ireland briefly in 1969.

The SAS undoubtedly carried out a number of missions silently and successfully, causing Roy Mason, then Secretary for Northern Ireland, to say in February 1977: "Intelligence gathered by the SAS has been of great value in bringing terrorists before the courts." On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the Guatemalans claim that SAS soldiers are patroling their border with Belize, in Central America, and are crossing into their territory. So far the British government is silent on this issue.

The official role of the SAS is one of "deep penetration behind enemy lines for sabotage and reconnaissance missions," and it is assigned to NATO, being one of the few special forces so committed. Both officers and soldiers are volunteers who undergo extremely tough and arduous selection training, in all weathers — mainly in the Welsh mountains — near their training center at Hereford. Less than 25 percent get through. Once accepted, the soldiers serve a three-year tour of duty with an option to renew their engagements if the SAS wants to keep them.

There is no direct entry into the SAS — all volunteers are chosen from among serving soldiers. All, even sergeants and warrant officers, have to revert to the rank of trooper, but promotion prospects are good as the SAS has a much higher proportion of WOs and NCOs than most regiments. As the SAS claims to be "over-recruited," its total strength, regular and volunteer, must be over 1,500. It has an officer cadre of about 100.

All SAS members have to be parachutists and, over and above their normal military skills, they have to be specialists as well as have a knowledge of current affairs. They operate in teams of four experts — one in all types of weap-

ons, anything from a Luger to Kalashnikov; one in explosives and sabotage; one in all types of communication; and the other in medicine. All have to requalify each year. There is little time or inclination for formal parades and pomp in the SAS, but strong self-discipline is demanded, so a man must be mature in character.

There are three SAS units — one regular, and two Territorial Army (TA). Each consists of a number of squadrons (six in the regular unit, five in the territorial), which in turn consist of a number of troops, usually five, each usually composed of about 20 men. The regular unit, 22 SAS, is based at Hereford, while the TA units are 21 SAS, based at the Duke of York's HQ, Chelsea, London, and 23 SAS based at Birmingham, with squadrons scattered at Leeds, Doncaster and Dundee.

SAS units carry out frequent exercises in Britain, in Europe with NATO forces and elsewhere overseas. One SAS commanding officer once told me, "We are all trying to see ahead to prepare ourselves, and we are trying new techniques and methods as we practice our skills." Unusual demands are sometimes made upon the SAS. On one occasion a detachment was borrowed by the inspector of Her Majesty's prisons to test new electronic fences at top-security prisons — from the inside.

It is of interest to note that the criminals who carried out Britain's Great Train Robbery in August 1963 — getting away with almost $7 million worth of English pounds — disguised themselves in army combat clothing, with SAS cloth insignia on their shoulders, so that, if seen, it would be thought they were merely SAS soldiers on one of their unconventional exercises.

In 1941 in North Africa, a second lieutenant of the Scots Guards by sheer audacity persuaded Gen. Aukinleck, then commander-in-chief in the Middle East, that it would be a good idea to assemble a group of soldiers to parachute behind the enemy's lines to sabotage his airfields. That second lieutenant was David Sterling, and his impromptu outfit was designated "L Detachment, Special Air Service Brigade." There was no such brigade in existence, but GHQ Cairo wanted the Germans to think there was. Sterling took his handful of enterprising individuals on their first operation, a successful one, on 17 November 1941, from which time the SAS dates its desert birth.

The first raiding parties consisted of five men, but experience reduced this to four, the number used today. These small groups of tough, reliable soldiers were found to be much more suitable for sabotage and reconnaissance missions than larger groups that attracted attention more readily. The SAS demonstrated that operations behind enemy lines produced results out of proportion to the numbers involved.

NCO wearing locally-made knife calls for morning assembly in Malaya. SAS played crucial role in defeat of communist rebels and pacification of Malaya in '50s. Photo: *Straits Times*, Singapore

The SAS badge is a winged dagger with the motto "Who Dares Wins." The dagger actually represents the sword of Damocles, while the wings, which have a distinctly Ancient Egyptian look about them, upon examination, were, in fact, taken from a fresco of an "Ibis with outstretched wings" in the foyer of the famous Shepherds Hotel in Cairo (burnt down by mobs in 1952), the body being covered by an SAS parachute.

The first beret worn by the SAS was white, an unpopular color, but this was soon replaced by one that blended with the sandy-yellow of the desert background. It was not until 1957 that the present beige-colored beret became the official headwear for the SAS.

When World War II ended the SAS was disbanded, being awarded 12 battle honors. (Unlike most infantry regiments, the SAS still does not have colors on which to emblazon its battle honors.) The impromptu wartime SAS was no more.

But the War Office decided there was a need for this *type* of unit and included one in the newly reforming Territorial Army. So it came to life again in 1948 in London, as the "21 SAS (Artists)," merging with the famous officer-producing Artist Rifles.

An impromptu reserve squadron was formed in 1950 to take part in the Korean War, but it was sent to Malaya, where there was an insurgent war in progress (see "SAS at War in Malaya," SOF, April '81).

The small SAS patrol groups were ideal for jungle warfare. Training was hard and sometimes unorthodox, but it produced results.

The SAS became adept at setting ambushes and adapting native animal traps to catch insurgents in the jungle. In 1958, the SAS was officially placed on the regular army order of battle, and it was decided by the War Office that the SAS, exclusively, would provide any special force required by the army in the future.

Since then, the SAS has operated in Oman, Aden, Borneo, the Falkland Islands and, of course, Northern Ireland as units (or sub-units), while individuals — either as advisers, instructors or on special missions — have also been active in such places as Cyprus, during the EOKA period, in Kenya during the Mau Mau campaign and at battle schools in several countries.

In 1959 in Oman, the insurgents took refuge on Jebel Akhdar (Green Mountain), a 10,000-foot mountain plateau with almost vertical, cliff-like sides, which was regarded as being impregnable. (In the 10th century an army of about 10,000 Persians failed to seize the mountain oasis and lost 9,000 soldiers.)

Patroling SAS groups gradually surrounded the Jebel, and then slowly inched their way forward and upward, literally scrambling from rock to rock and ledge to ledge by night, becoming involved in several close-quarter encounters. At night it was so cold that water froze in the soldiers' canteens — while by day it almost boiled in the blazing sun. The SAS spearheaded the final successful assault on the summit of the plateau, slipping between the vital twin peaks guarding the main entrance, called by the soldiers "The Sabrinas." The SAS CO said that the battle had been "won by surprise, not slaughter."

In Aden Protectorate in 1964, the SAS spearheaded a brigade group moving against tribes in the mountainous Radfan area, adjacent to Yemen, but the SAS detachment was detected and surrounded. When darkness fell, the officer in charge ordered his men to break off the fight and make their way back to re-

Exhibiting the usual SAS disregard for spit-and-polish (emphasized in the field) these troopers squat in a tepid stream in Borneo, placing a fish-trap. Self-sufficiency is a hallmark of SAS field troops, and that extends to augmenting issued rations from natural supplies. Photo: *Soldier*

join their own forces. An SAS ambush, in which the officer was killed, delayed the pursuing tribesmen — who were fierce guerrilla fighters in their own terrain — enabling the remainder to get away safely. One other SAS man had been killed.

The Radfanis seized the two bodies and, according to their barbarous local custom, decapitated them. Later, the two heads were displayed on stakes in the market place at Taiz, the main city in southern Yemen. The SAS provided the Arabs with a ghastly medieval spectacle. The Brits got their revenge against the Radfanis in the form of heavy artillery fire and air strikes on rebel mountain outposts. SAS men, dressed as Arabs, intercepted Radfani terrorists in and around Aden City, keeping them alive whenever possible for interrogation. British efforts in Aden were abandoned in 1967, however, leaving southern Yemen to become an anything-but-democratic Soviet satellite.

Guerrilla, desert and jungle warfare have given way to sophisticated urban and international terrorism, in which hijacking and hostage situations have become commonplace. The SAS has slipped easily and quietly into a counter-terrorist role.

SAS personnel have been present at the scenes of terrorist situations as advisers and observers, such as in Holland in June 1977, when a train was hijacked by Moluccan terrorists. At this siege, the SAS representatives offered not only advice, but also the use of their new "Stun" (concussion) grenade. This is a British invention which, upon explosion, creates sufficient noise and flash to momentarily stun people for up to six seconds — vital time for anti-terrorist teams to swing into action. The shrapnel casing of the grenade is contained by a cardboard sleeve, so it is not as dangerous in that respect. The Dutch refused to allow its use, saying that it might cause permanent deafness to the hostage children on the train.

Four months later, on 13 October 1977, a German Lufthansa airliner, flying from Majorca to Frankfurt with 91 people on board, was hijacked just after take-off by four Arabs — two men and two women — and diverted to Dubai, in the Middle East. The hijacked airliner was shadowed by a German plane, carrying a detachment of the *Grennzschutzgruppe*, the GSG-9, the West German counter-terrorist force (see "Achtung: Terrorists," SOF, March '80). At Dubai, the hijacked airliner was monitored by at least two SAS men. The airliner moved on to Mogadishu, in Somalia, where a successful rescue operation was mounted, in which, for the first time, the British Stun grenade was used.

The hostages were all rescued, three of the hijackers killed and the other captured. Two SAS men were with the GSG-9 detachment. Did they take an active part in this rescue operation, and did they actually throw the Stun grenades?

Offically they did neither, but since the West German government wanted to decorate the SAS personnel concerned and the British government would not allow it, one wonders if the official answer was the correct one. Stun grenades were used again with outstanding success by the SAS detachment that took part in Operation Nimrod, the rescue of the hostages held by terrorists in the Iranian Embassy in London (see "SAS Dares and Wins," SOF, September '80).

Terrorism has become an international fact of life, and may progress from aircraft hijacking and hostage situations to seizing small nuclear warheads or even a nuclear establishment. The revolutionary left, the Provos, other terrorists, would-be terrorists and their sympathizers would like to pressure the British government into disbanding the SAS, which deters them from their violent goals. But it is such a valuable force, with special character, skills and endurance that can be used to combat the unexpected and unanticipated, that this is unlikely to happen.

If SAS successes in Northern Ireland, at Mogadishu and in Operation Nimrod were not enough to insure the survival of the unit, the excellent record of the SAS in a "regular" combat role in the Falklands assures the world that the cap badge with the motto, "Who Dares Wins," will not be retired in the immediate future.

Edgar O'Ballance, a military historian of international renown, is an active member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Foreign Affairs Research Institute in London. He has written a host of books dealing with all aspects of war and the men who fight them, including The Language of Violence, Terror in Ireland *and* No Victor, No Vanquished. *He served with the British Army from 1935 to 1948.*

A prolific author, journalist, defense commentator and lecturer, O'Ballance is a tenacious researcher who combines comprehensive literary resources and on-the-spot personal interviews to create his stories — and he tells it like it is.

SAS TODAY

by Leroy Thompson

Leroy Thompson first wrote about the SAS for SOF in April '81 (see "SAS at War in Malaya"). His practical experience includes special and base-security positions in the U.S. Air Force and work as deputy sheriff, bodyguard and security chief for a grocery chain. His academic background includes graduate study in military history at the Universities of Oxford, Edinburgh and London.

The SAS was active in a variety of specialties until it was disbanded at the end of WWII. Recreated in 1947, the SAS was committed to the counterinsurgency campaign in Malaya in 1950 and was recently employed in the Falklands. Between those wars the SAS has hardly been out of action, though until recently it was virtually unknown outside military circles.

In May 1980, the SAS hit the headlines when the Counter-Revolutionary Warfare (CRW) specialists from Pagoda Troop of the SAS rescued hostages from the Iranian Embassy in London (see "SAS Dares and Wins," SOF, September '80). Special weapons, unusual avenues of attack and drill-team precision were SAS trademarks in London as they had been in North Africa, Normandy, Malaya, Ireland and the Middle East.

Despite its outstanding record in North Africa and Europe during WWII, the SAS was almost a no-profile unit and was disbanded at the end of the war. In 1947, however, the SAS was reformed as part of the Territorial Army (British equivalent of the U.S. Army Reserve). The new regiment, 21 SAS, took over the name and headquarters of the Artists' Rifles, a TA unit which had served with distinction in the Boer War and in WWI. Twenty-one SAS immediately attracted many wartime SAS veterans to its ranks. Along with the Malayan Scouts and some SAS from Rhodesia, volunteers from 21 SAS proved so effective during the jungle fighting in Malaya that the SAS was once again constituted as a regular regiment when 22 SAS was formed.

Today, 30 years later, 22 SAS Regiment remains the regular SAS regiment. From 22's current base at Bradbury Lines, Herefordshire, a Sabre Squadron remains ready for deployment anywhere in the world within 24 hours. In addition to 22 SAS, there are now two TA SAS regiments — 21 SAS which is still based in London and 23 SAS (formed in 1959) which is based in Birmingham but draws heavily on Scots — so much so, in fact, that its squadrons have often been called "clans."

Total manpower of the three SAS regiments is classified, but 800 to 1,000 wouldn't be too far off, no more than 300 to 400 of whom are on active duty with 22 SAS. There are also two SAS signals units: 63 Signal Squadron SAS for the TA regiments and 264 Signal Squadron for 22 SAS.

"Chargin' Charlie" was here: SAS training area near Hereford, England, where candidates learn to move and survive in the wild. Photo: *Soldier*

From enlistment to retirement, toughness and exclusivity define service in the SAS. In 1977, 471 men tried out for two SAS TA regiments — 41 made it. Selection courses further try already trained men as the course gets tougher. The trainers repeatedly suggest that trainees should drop out, because the SAS wants only the soldiers who belong in such an elite unit. Three selection courses, each of about four months, are run each year for the Territorial SAS ("Terriers"), while two selection courses are available for 22 SAS.

The climax of an SAS selection course is much like "Hell Week" with the U.S. Navy SEALs. The final test for trainees — already deliberately pushed to the limit of normal human endurance — is a 40-mile forced march over the mountainous Welsh countryside. Carrying a load of packed Bergen rucksack and L1A1 rifle (total weight, 55 pounds), the candidate must complete the course in less than 20 hours. To make things worse, he doesn't know where he's going. He is given an unmarked map and a set of map coordinates. These coordinates must not be written down — since they might betray the operation to the enemy if the papers were captured — and can only be carried in the trainee's memory. With his map and compass, the candidate must find his way through the prescribed checkpoints to the final rendezvous.

A three-week combat-survival course is also part of the training process. Living off the land is stressed as are escape and evasion. Each SAS man has a compact survival kit which fits on a webbed belt, and he learns to use this kit to the utmost. The combat-survival course normally ends with a banquet of seaweed, rat, frog and other "survival delicacies." As a matter of course, all SAS men also receive training in static-line parachuting, weapons, communications, demolitions and hand-to-hand combat.

Territorial SAS regiments attract a bewildering variety of recruits: zoo-keepers, stunt-men, barristers, policemen, miners, grave-diggers and university lecturers. Even a few peers of the realm have served in Territorial SAS. No matter what his civilian job, the SAS Territorial must be willing and able to make time for training beyond the demands made on an ordinary reservist. These soldiers joke that SAS stands for "Saturdays And Sundays."

SAS weekend training is hardly for the armchair variety of weekend warrior. Signallers may be ordered to scale sheer cliffs of some hundreds of feet before performing the more ordinary

communications mission expected of other soldiers. Others may be dumped out of a perfectly good submarine 10 miles from the coast in order to practice their handling of paddle-driven decked canoes. Every SAS Territorial must also make eight parachute jumps each year.

The SAS is trained for victory, but their training does not neglect the other possibilities. Combat training includes simulated capture and interrogation. True to everything else the SAS does, this course includes "hands-on-training," in which the interrogators play rough to see if information can be extracted from the "prisoner." Everyone realizes the SAS will be operating behind enemy lines and if captured will not be treated with kid gloves. (In WWII Hitler ordered any captured SAS soldier to be executed as a terrorist.)

When an SAS candidate has been selected and awarded his sand-colored beret on the completion of his course, he is still not considered trained. Although the basic tour is three years, a new troop will not reach full combat effectiveness for two years — not the waste of training and manpower that it might seem: Most soldiers extend once they have made it into a regiment.

The SAS also enthusiastically participates in international training exercises. Along with the U.S. Special Forces and other NATO special units, the SAS helps to conduct the NATO Long Range Re-

connaissance Patrol school. "Chargin' Charlie" Beckwith served with the SAS in Malaya, and brought his Delta counterterrorist unit from the United States to train with his former comrades in Hereford, England.

As part of a cooperative venture to test the defenses of Denmark, 130 men from SAS Regiments 21, 22 and 23 parachuted into Denmark in 1972. It took 800 Danes and their dogs to turn up only 20 of the airborne Englishmen. This friendly training exercise was marred, unfortunately, by the Danes' shocked reaction to casualties incurred on dogs at the hands of SAS troopers specially trained to deal with canine opponents.

Unlike the movie heroes who emulate the SAS, some soldiers don't come back. In Bradbury Lines there is a clock tower inscribed with the names of SAS KIAs. To live through SAS service is to have "beat the clock." The tower is also inscribed with the lines:

We are the pilgrims, master; we shall go always a little further; it may be beyond that last blue mountain barr'd with snow, across that angry or that glimmering sea.

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EMPIRE

Continued from page 79

And once again the Union Jack whipped in the gusty winds of the South Atlantic above the Falkland Islands.

The war was over.

SBS THEN AND NOW

The paths of the British Royal Marine Special Boat Squadron and Army Special Air Services regiments' Boat Troops have been intertwined since both had their genesis early in World War II.

The Marines have employed small boats to transport raiding parties to and from operational objectives since they drew the role of furnishing Commando units to Lord Louis Mountbatten's Combined Operations Command, which was established in 1940 to coordinate activities of the British Army, Royal Air Force and Navy, including the Marines.

The basic idea of how such Commando units should operate, however, was conceived by Maj. Dudley Clark, an Army General Staff officer who had witnessed, while on duty in Palestine prior to the war, how small bands of irregulars employing hit-and-run tactics could tie down much larger numbers of conventional forces.

British Army reserve units furnished the first Commando troops, but the Marines soon took on the major role — at the suggestion of Lord Mountbatten, commanding officer of Combined Operations.

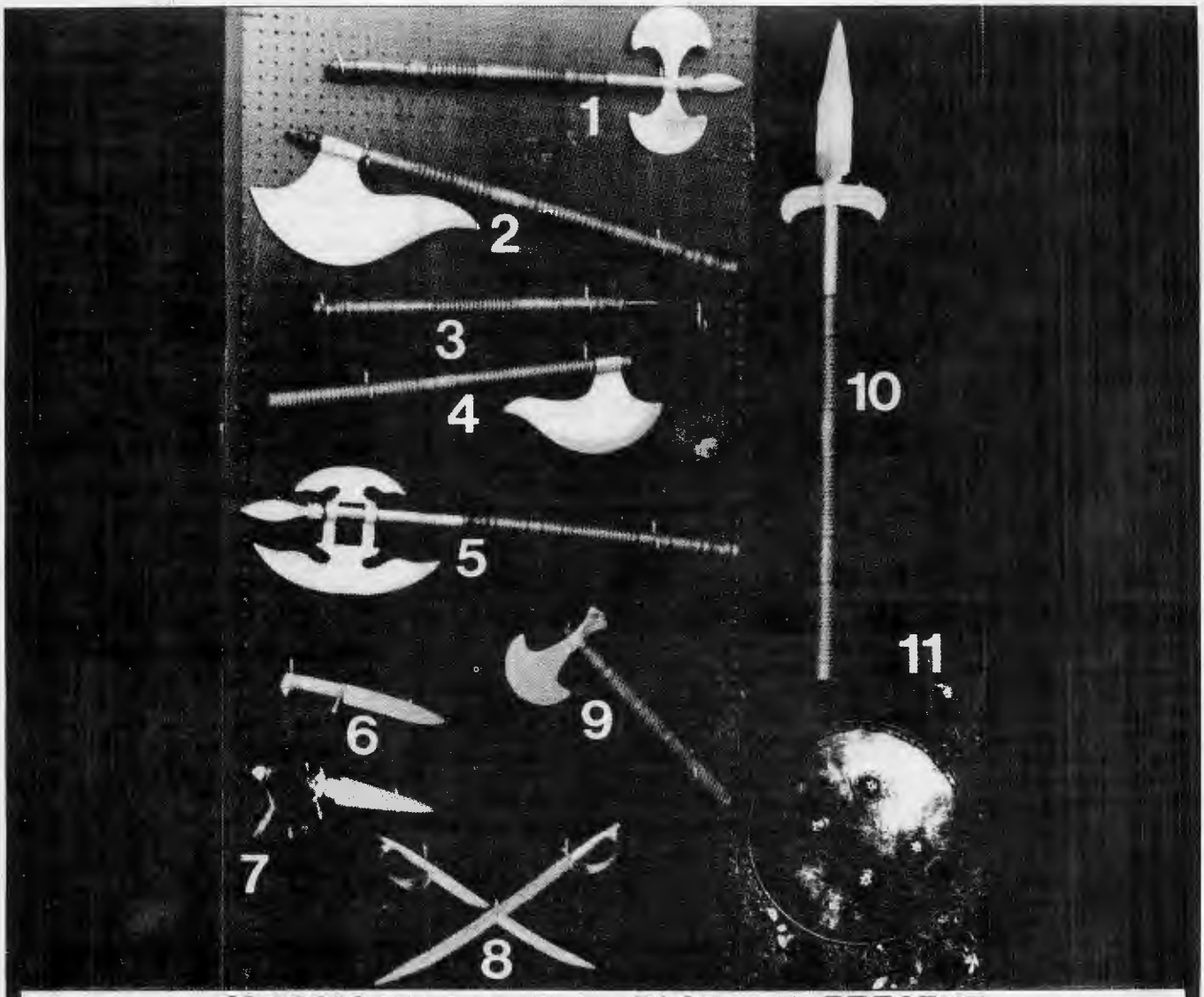
There was nothing in the military "book" about the use of small boats, so the Marines hurdled this obstacle by simply assigning to Commando units men who had worked on the water in some capacity or were yachting and boating enthusiasts.

Their first — and smallest — vessel was a collapsible canoe called a "Folbot."

In July 1940, a combined Army and Marine unit established itself at Arran, Scotland, first known as Folbot Section and later as Special Boat Section. The initial plan was to assign 30 SBS canoeists to each Commando unit to gather intelligence prior to a landing.

However, in 1941, the SBS was divided into two groups, one assigned to operations in North Africa and the Middle East, the other remaining in England where it moved to Dover to conduct beach reconnaissance and harass Nazi shipping.

The SBS unit sent to North Africa ultimately merged into a parachute-trained Commando-like force formed by Lt. David Stirling called



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2

the "L" Detachment Special Air Service Brigade. In 1942, the 1st SAS Regiment created an amphibious force called Special Boat Squadron. It was renamed Special Boat Service the following year.

The SBS then took over command of a unit known as Small Scale Raiding Force (SSRF) which until then had been directly under the command of Combined Operations. It took part in reconnaissance and raiding parties off the coasts of France and West Africa. SSRF also conducted raids against German-held Greek islands.

Perhaps the best known exploit of Royal Marine SBS troops in WWII was that of 10 raiders from what was then called the RM "Boom Patrol Detachment."

Their mission was to destroy as many German fast blockade runners as possible. The Germans were carrying cargoes of sophisticated explosive fuses and radar equipment intended for Japanese forces. Problem was, the vessels were moored some 70 miles up the Gironde Estuary from the French Atlantic Coast.

British war planners studied the situation and decided they had a choice: a small force of Royal Marines in canoes or a landing of two airborne divisions with heavy air cover. Since this was early in 1942, and there was no known way to extricate so many airborne troops from that deep inside German-occupied

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France, the Marines drew the task.

Thus, five two-man canoes set off from the submarine *Tuna*, moving up the waterway under cover of darkness on the night of 7 December 1942.

Four days later, they had successfully planted underwater limpet mines on a number of ships. The mines exploded, the ships sank and the Japs didn't get their materiel, which could have caused both the British and American navies a lot of problems in the Pacific.

Two of the Marines successfully escaped via French resistance underground evasion routes. The other eight either drowned or perished before German firing squads. All became known as "the Cockleshell Heroes" to a British citizenry desperately in need of heroic deeds in those dark days of early WWII.

In the Far East, a unit called Small Operations Group used small craft while performing recon and raiding duties in that theater of operations.

But at war's end, the British High Command disbanded all such outfits, including what had become the SAS Brigade.

However, about a year later, the War Office changed its mind and decided there was a need to promote raiding concepts in the armed forces. The SAS took on the role of long-range, long-term operations and the Marines short-range, short-term Commando-like tasks.

From then until 1971, the Marines conducted tactical experiments with small-craft recon and raiding operations, finally evolving the Special Boat Squadron in 1974.

Meanwhile, the SAS decided that it too should have a small-craft capacity and established its Boat Troops with the assistance of the already formed Marine units. Now the SAS has a Boat Troop of 16 to 20 men assigned to each of its four regular squadrons. SAS Boat Troop soldiers undertake training similar to that of the Marine SBS and both have conducted exchange programs with the U.S. Navy SEALs.

Since their inception and up to and including the Falklands, SAS and SBS troopers have fought with distinction — although with little publicity — in such places as Korea during the war there and against communist-inspired insurgencies in Borneo, Malaysia, Oman and Aden.

—B.P.

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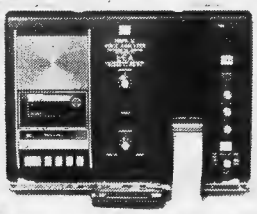

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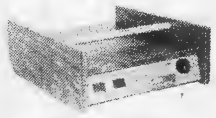

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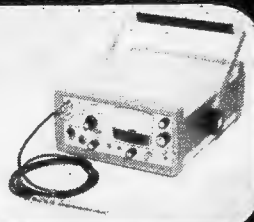

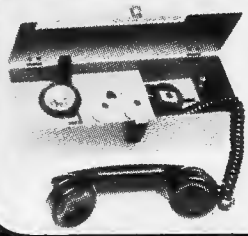

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ROUGHNECK

Continued from page 67

— very quickly. If a man has the right attitude when he starts to work, and is attentive and respectful to advice and commands of the experienced hands, he can count on them to watch out for him. As a rule, everyone, experienced or not, watches out for everyone else.

The floor hand depends on the derrick man to release and rack the pipe above at the proper time. "I'm always on top of it up there," said Joe. "I'm always ready for the unexpected. I don't want to see my roughnecks get hurt."

Most city folk have the preconceived notion that oil towns are rough-and-tumble places — basically small schools of hard knocks out in the middle of nowhere. This usually isn't the case, but many men come to the oil fields with the presumption that they are pretty tough customers, and aren't going to take any guff from anyone. This is a quick way to get hurt — if one insists on practicing this attitude on a rig. Everyone works together like a well-oiled machine, and if someone yells at someone else, it's only to get the job done safely and right. Roughnecks are "good 'ole boys" in the true sense of the word, and they want to stay that way. The dangers of the work develop a camaraderie and a sense of caring for one another.

Roughnecks know they are performing a special job necessary to our economy. American oil companies are determined to get our own oil, rather than rely on foreign imports — which in itself threatens national security.

We need to get our own oil out, and it's here, and the American roughneck does it.

How do you become a roughneck? Although most want to start on an offshore rig, this is very difficult. Work offshore is demanding and isolated. A roughneck may work a 12-hour shift in hitches of seven, 10, 14 or 28 days, with an equal amount of time off onshore. Whatever your shift time is, you are on that rig until your time is up. Enforced isolation is a disadvantage, but the pay is better and living conditions and food are good. Opportunities for promotion abound, and good workers are never overlooked. Because safety problems are many on an offshore rig, my advice is to start roughnecking on a land-based one first, and get on with a company. Get to know them, and let them get to know you. Eventually, roughnecks can work their way up in a company, receiving its benefits and more pay — and opportunities to work around the world. Once you get your foot in the door — which can be as simple as becoming a relief crew member on a short-handed rig — you're on your way.

"I came out from California to the

Rangely patch with about $10 to my name," said Mike. "I went to the Twin Arrow Company office, and they needed hands. I had to sleep in the car the first night, but I got work on the second day here."

The best way to find work is to know where the oil patches are, pack up and go there. As always, it takes money to make money, so bring along enough cash to live on for a few weeks: You might not find a job on the first day. Be prepared to spend some nights in a cheap motel or your car. Before you leave, invest in a pair of insulated coveralls, hard hat with winter liner and a few pairs of light work gloves. (No need for the warm stuff south of the equator, but being outdoors all day tends to get chilly sometimes.)

Bars are the best places for information. Listen to conversations to see if the fellows tipping beer in the corner work the rigs. Once you have singled out a bona-fide roughneck, buy him a beer. Strangers are often judged with contempt at first, as can happen in country where human beings are few and far between, but harbor a good sense of humor and you will be readily accepted. Ask what the work situation is like, and what companies are drilling in the area. If no one has offered you a job yet, ask where drilling company offices are.

Usually found in the largest "population center" in the area, the office will be a place to fill out an application. More often than not, no experience is necessary when a rig needs warm bodies. The offices are frequented by rig foremen — or "toolpushers." Toolpushers usually manage at least two rigs, and are familiar with the goings on in the area. Ask the toolpusher if he needs a hand.

Remember, attitude is all-important. If you come across to the toolpusher as willing to learn and work, he will be much more likely to help you. If he doesn't need an extra hand, he may know another rig that does.

On your way to the oil fields, look for derricks on the horizon. Drive up to the rig and ask anyone around where the driller is. He's the man in charge of the actual operation of the rig. Toolpushers spend a lot of time traveling and checking equipment, and the driller is head honcho of the hands. Don't bother him if he looks busy. Wait quietly until he has time to have a word with you. He may be waiting for the exact moment to hit the drill break, and his attention must be on his job, not you. When he does have time, you may find he needs a hand — or can tell you how to get to another rig that has work.

Drilling rigs are often found at the end of rugged four-wheel-drive roads, so it's almost impossible to hop around to all of them in a particular patch. The nearest town tavern (if there is a town) is usually where roughnecks can be found after their shift. Find out the situation. If work isn't immediately available,

don't be discouraged. Move on to the next patch if the situation looks bad.

Ray Holman, driller on Manning Oil Company Rig No. 10, drives by a small food store on his way to work in eastern Utah every morning. "I've seen guys looking for work waiting outside the store in the morning, but I've seldom seen the same one twice," he said. "There's work out here, but don't expect to find it on the first day out. A fellow's got to be a little patient."

Holman has been a roughneck for 17 years, mostly in the Rangely area. "I worked with one company for a couple years, and applied for a 16-month contract in Alaska to roughneck. I've gone up there twice now on different rigs. I applied to work in El Salvador, and was about to go when all the trouble broke out down there." While in Alaska, Holman's wife and kids were paid "separation pay" by the company.

Oil companies take care of their own, and a good hand always has room to advance if he stays with one company. But many roughnecks prefer a different route. They'll work for a year or so, living in virtual poverty, and save up enough to go adventuring for a couple of years, then return to the oil fields.

Once you've worked the rigs, you can always go back. Job security has never been a characteristic of rig work, but this doesn't bother most experienced hands. If they decide to quit or are run off for some reason, they have enough money to live on for a while — and an experienced hand is always in demand somewhere. Most companies allow a week or two severance pay if a hand quits or is fired.

If a driller is run off for some reason, he will often take his entire crew with him. If personalities clash, production can suffer from it. "They ran our driller off a couple of weeks ago," said Joe. "If he called me tonight, I'd quit here tomorrow and work for him. He's a good operator."

Most men that stay with the job like it, and I've heard many say that they would be happy roughnecking for the rest of their lives — and many do just that, which is a lot more than one could say about many blue-collar jobs. Men become attached to this work. The job sets then apart from the rest of society, and can fulfill many of their aspirations. Roughnecking offers change, movement, danger, adventure and money if you have a penchant for it.

Ken Rens started out as a worm five years ago. He's a toolpusher now in charge of two rigs and makes upward of $40,000 a year. He just bought a home in Rangely for his family — wife Helen and two-year-old daughter Amanda.

"I was just passing through with no money five years ago," said Rens. "A friend put me up for a week, and I heard

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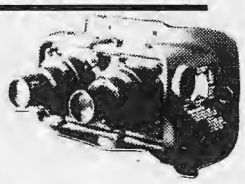

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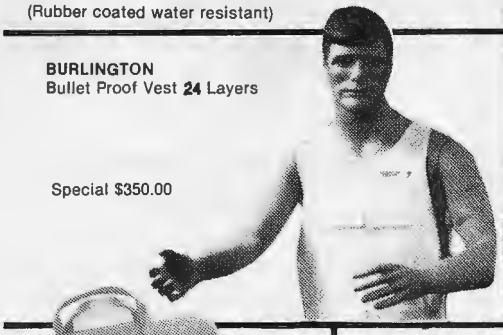

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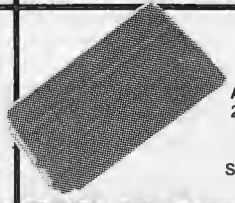

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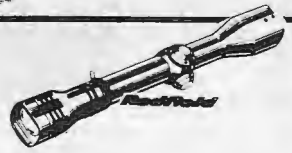

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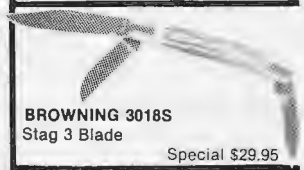

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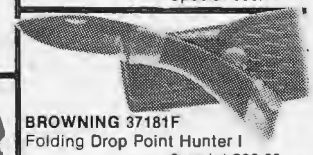

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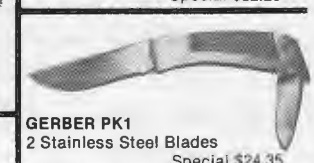

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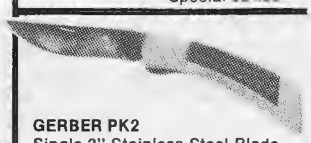

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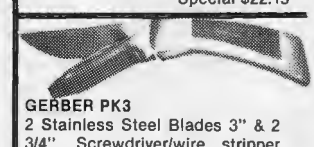

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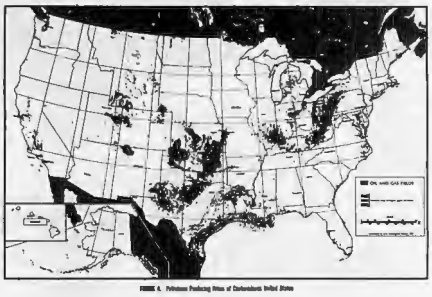
of some work and got a job. I didn't think I'd stay at it. Figured I'd go back to the city. But it kind of grows on you."

Rens saw combat in 'Nam as a Recon Marine, and roughnecking suits him just fine after all that.

The oil industry is booming, and there are many industry-related fields with jobs available. Many roughnecks started out as dishwashers, truck drivers or factory workers in oil towns before finding the work they wanted on a rig. With some money to live on, work clothes and the right attitude, you can become a roughneck.

Find work and prove yourself. If you don't like it, leave. If you find the work to your liking, it can be a rewarding experience. There will be drudgery and hard times, but adventure and satisfaction usually outweigh the disadvantages. It is a special breed that lives and works this wild land — and the men that do are proud of it.



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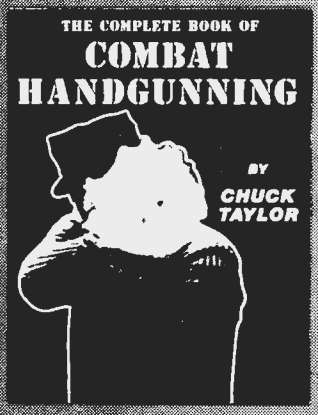

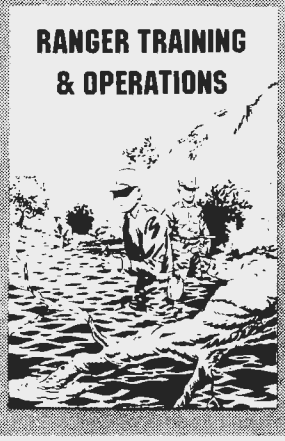

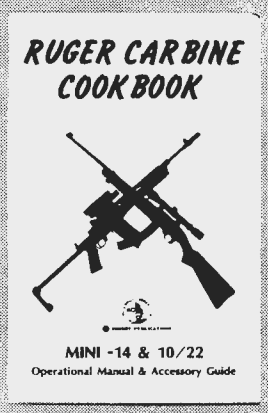

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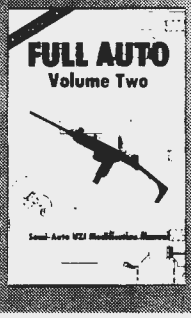

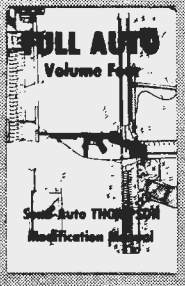

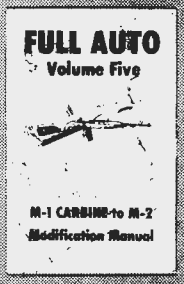

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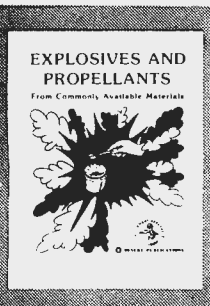

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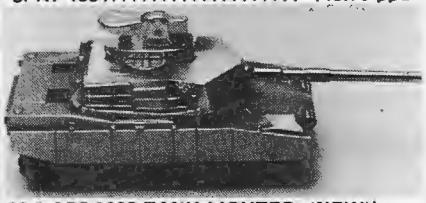

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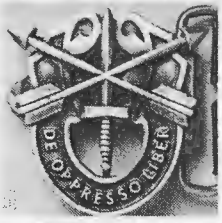

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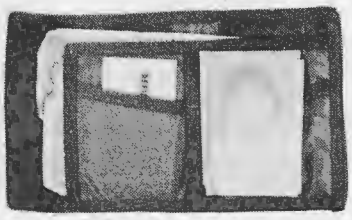

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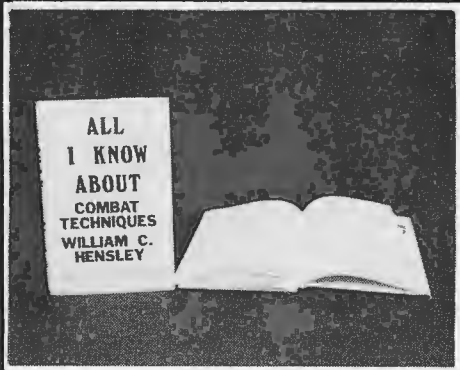

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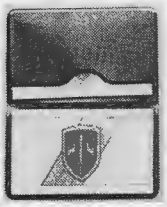

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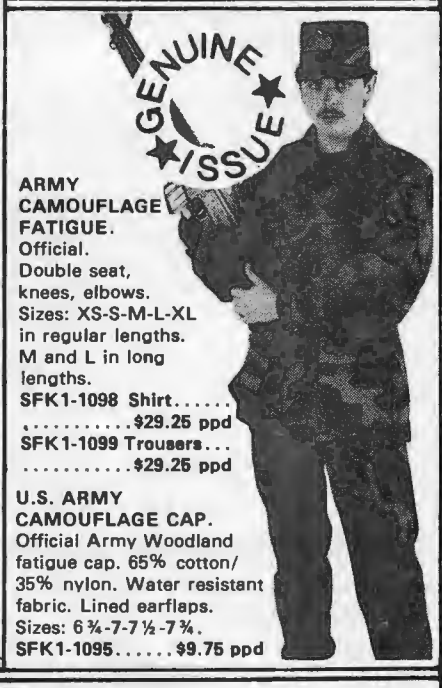

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CZECH MATE

Continued from page 42

Our informant's opinions of the M16A1 rifle are well intended, but largely incorrect. As James Fallows has pointed out, the early reliability problems of the M16 were not a function of the gas system (see "Military Marketeering," SOF, November '82). The bolt carrier group is not difficult to clean under any conditions, if the proper equipment and training are provided. There is no need to design a folding stock as a successful collapsible stock was incorporated into the XM177E2/CAR 15 series.

The comparison with the new Soviet AK-74 is yet to be demonstrated in a direct confrontation on the field of battle. While the Kalashnikov is a design of proven reliability, it is by no means perfect.

Peter G. Kokalis,
SOF Military Small Arms Editor

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WORD WAR

Continued from page 49

general in the dispatch made a repeat performance in the correspondent's book.

Sgt. John Ashe (brother of the world-famous tennis player) was a Marine assigned to public-relations duties. He delivered a biting indictment of the young wire-service correspondents and the "war freaks" who frequented Da Nang (which was a remote outpost to the media, though not to the military). They would, he recalled, rarely go into the field and never spend the night when they did; would deport themselves as if they had never heard a shot fired with intent to kill before that moment — to their own and the Marines' peril; and then file stories that "bore little or no relation" to what he — and they — had seen. They didn't want to know, Ashe added, what was really happening in the First Corps Area, where the Marines had winkled out the Viet Cong by stationing squads in villages.

Instructive on a large scale is the contrast between the coverage of the American massacre at My Lai and the Viet Cong massacre at Hue. At My Lai, a junior American officer allowed his men to kill dozens of presumably uninvolved farmers in full violation of standing orders. At Hue, the former Imperial capital, the Viet Cong killed several thousand community leaders, including a number of Europeans, in accordance with standing orders to "destroy the bourgeoisie." The U.S. military's attempt to suppress reports of the My Lai massacre, of course, made it even worse when the story was finally released by the Dispatch News Agency, a curious organization that came into existence in Vietnam with unknown financial backing and vanished once its purpose of opposing the war had brought Hanoi victory. But the Hue massacre was, somehow, uninteresting.

By the same token, American restraint was not news, even to the experienced correspondents, because it was a "non-event." Flying in a command helicopter of the Ninth Division over the Mekong Delta, another U.S. correspondent and I heard the brigade commander countermand his battalion commander's order to the infantry and the helicopter gunships to attack some 100 enemy who were pouring out of a surrounded village, still firing.

"Do not, repeat, do not, attack," the colonel directed. "They're using women and children as shields." Neither my colleague nor myself thought the incident worth reporting — a palpable error of judgment induced by the atmosphere in which we were working. If the Ninth Division had killed the civilians, we would have filed copiously.

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Equally lamentable was the failure of the Western press to cover with any thoroughness the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam, which over the long run was doing most of the fighting. Correspondents were reluctant to commit their safety to units whose resolution they distrusted — sometimes for good reason, more often because of a kind of racist contempt — in order to get stories that interested their editors so little. Coverage of Vietnamese politics, as well as social and economic developments, was sporadic — except for military coups and political crises, and those were often misreported.

Examples of misdirected or distorted reporting could be amassed almost indefinitely. The war, after all, lasted some 20 years. A former *Washington Post* and *New York Times* correspondent, Peter Braestrup, has published a two-volume study of the coverage of the Tet offensive of 1968. Quite significantly, it attracted little interest compared to, say, William Shawcross's *Sideshow* or Michael Herr's *Dispatches*.

Nowadays, Jean Lacouture, Anthony Lewis and William Shawcross (among some other "Vietnam veterans") clearly feel deceived or even betrayed by the communists of Indochina; yet surely, they voluntarily adopted the ideological bias that allowed Hanoi to deceive them. The Vietnamese communists — unlike their Cambodian confreres — had, after all, openly declared their intention of imposing totalitarian rule upon the South. Why, then, were the "critics of the American war" so genuinely surprised by the consequences?

More crucially, why did a virtual generation of Western journalists deceive itself so consistently as to the nature of the "liberation" in Indochina? Why did the correspondents *want* to believe in the good faith of the communists? Why did they so *want* to disbelieve the avowed motives of the United States? Why did so much of their presumably factual reporting regularly reflect their ideological bias?

The obvious explanation is not as ingenuous as it may appear; the majority of Western correspondents and commentators adopted their idiosyncratic approach to the Indochina war precisely because other journalists had already adopted that approach. To put it more directly, it was fashionable (this was, after all, the age of Radical Chic) to be "a critic of the American war."

Decisive in the case of the Americans, who set the tone, was the normally healthy adversary relationship between the U.S. press and the U.S. government. American newspapermen have often felt, with some justification, that if an administration affirmed a controversial fact, that fact — if not *prima facie* false — was at the least suspect.

As the lies of successive administrations regarding Indochina escalated,

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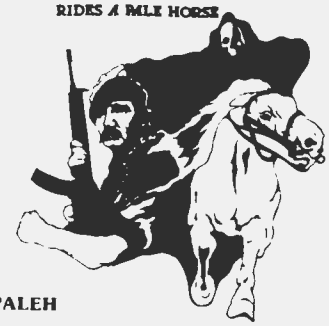

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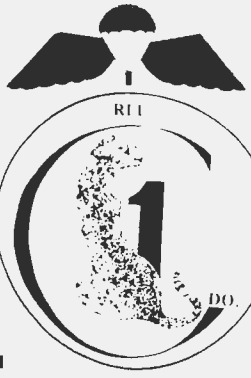

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that conviction became the credo of the press. The psychological process that began with the unfounded optimism of President John F. Kennedy's ebullient "New Frontiersmen," who were by and large believed, ended with the disastrous last stand of Richard Nixon's dour palace guard, who were believed by no one.

The reaction against official mendacity was initially healthy, but later became distorted, self-serving and self-perpetuating. A faulty syllogism was unconsciously accepted: Washington was lying consistently; Hanoi contradicted Washington; therefore Hanoi was telling the truth.

The initial inclination to look upon Hanoi as a fount of pure truth was intelligently fostered by the communists, who selectively rewarded "critics of the American war" with visas to North Vietnam. A number of influential journalists and public figures (ranging from former cabinet officers to film actresses) were feted in North Vietnam. They were flattered not only by the attention and the presumed inside information proffered by the North Vietnamese, but by their access to a land closed to most Americans. The favored few — and the aspiring many — helped establish a climate in which it was not only fashionable but, somehow, an act of courage to follow the critical crowd in Saigon and Washington while praising Hanoi. The skeptical correspondent risked ostracism by his peers and conflicts with his editors if he did not run with "the herd of independent minds," if he did not support the consensus.

The larger reason for the tenacity of the consensus went much deeper. It welled from a new view of this war, which was quite different from the press's view of other wars — and from a new messianic approach to the role of the press in wartime. The alteration occurred in three stages, beginning with World War II, proceeding through the Korean War, and culminating in Vietnam.

World War II was generally considered a crusade against evil. Allied and Soviet atrocities normally went unreported, since their publication to the world would have besmirched the anti-Nazi crusade. The bestial aims and deeds of the Nazis, reinforced by the bestial deeds of the Japanese, compelled correspondents and officials to agreement on the nature of the war and, therefore, to substantial agreement on the way it was fought. The press might criticize tactical errors; it might even cavil at certain strategic decisions. But it was bent neither upon revealing every possible error or misstatement made by the authorities nor upon questioning their fundamental purposes.

The Korean War was not a universal crusade. A few correspondents questioned the wisdom of committing U.S.

troops to the peninsula, while many questioned the strategic decisions of Gen. Douglas MacArthur (particularly his dash to the Yalu, which directly challenged the Chinese, whose industrial plexus lay in Manchuria just across that river). The character and administration of President Syngman Rhee of the Republic of Korea were often criticized by those correspondents whose interest extended beyond military hostilities. Nonetheless, a limited consensus did exist. No one — except the Stalinists — doubted seriously that North Korea had attacked South Korea.

Aside from a marked weakness in covering internal politics in both the South and the North — a weakness that presaged a disastrous disability in Indochina — Korea was, in my view, the best-covered American war of modern times. Besides, the conflict was, by and large, straightforward and simple to understand.

Indochina was never simple or straightforward, but was arcane even before the commitment of U.S. ground forces. Afterwards, it became so complex that it was virtually impossible to understand it in all its ramifications; and, I must add, it was absolutely impossible to convey those ramifications to the public. Today I recall with chagrin my rather condescending amusement when a television producer argued in the mid-1960s: "We shouldn't be in Indochina because the American people can't understand the war — and the people won't support a war they can't understand." He was, of course, right (even if the American press helped to prevent any proper understanding).

In any event, Vietnam was covered by a press corps that was bitterly distrustful of Washington and harshly antagonistic towards Saigon. The press consistently magnified the allies' deficiencies — and displayed almost saintly tolerance of those misdeeds of Hanoi it could neither disregard nor deny.

It is possible that the Vietnam Syndrome will recur; it is not unlikely that Western foreign policy, with the United States as its faltering — or even resurgent — leader, will again be forced to operate in an environment dominated by a hostile press. The personal experience of one journalist is not normally pertinent to such a high political question. However, I was, as a correspondent and commentator, perforce a participant as well as an observer in the Vietnam imbroglio from 1955 to 1975. When "the media became the war," everyone associated with the media became part of the war, however reluctantly. An account of my experience, therefore, may illuminate this discussion and help the reader weigh my historical assessments.

From 1955 through 1965 I was opposed to U.S. military intervention despite my personal sympathy for the

Indochinese peoples. Having in 1955 sailed from Haiphong in the north to Saigon with several thousand among almost a million refugees from the Democratic Republic, I was moved by their justified fears. Besides, I detested Hanoi's Stalinist repression. Nevertheless, I felt that Indochina was a strategic backwater that should not be transformed into a vital interest by committing regular American troops to a disadvantageous Asian battlefield. Because of my concern with the effect of events in Indochina upon developments in China and elsewhere in Southeast Asia I did, however, feel that the West should not turn its back on Indochina, though it should avoid entrapment.

Such reservations made me popular with neither official Americans nor with those journalists who urged deeper involvement. Many correspondents and commentators were enthusiastic about the creeping U.S. commitment, while the administration of President Kennedy reacted strongly to my judgment (in *Newsweek* in late 1961) that President Ngo Dinh Diem could not preserve South Vietnam. In December 1962, when I was stationed in Europe, a *Newsweek* cover story concluded that Diem was doing well and that the Kennedy commitment to Indochina was fundamentally sound. That replay of the optimistic Washington view was published over my editorial opposition. (I was, incidentally, not in Indochina during the battles between Diem and the dissident Buddhists, or during the succession of short-lived regimes that followed Diem's murder.)

When I returned early in 1966, matters were radically altered. The United States had in 1965 brought in major armed units to prevent the South's collapse under the North's intensified subversion. Despite the U.S. intervention, that collapse had clearly only been forestalled, not averted. Direct involvement had, moreover, made Indochina an area of primary strategic interest to the United States in the eyes not only of apprehensive allies but of potential enemies as well. The United States was committed to the enterprise that had earlier broken the French will — that is, preventing communist conquest of Indochina.

China was already launched upon the cataclysmic "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," a virtual civil war fought to determine whether Maoists or moderates would rule the world's most populous country. Foreign policy was already a major Chinese issue, and the collapse of South Vietnam would have strengthened the extremists, who advocated internal suppression and China's diplomatic isolation.

While continuing to urge U.S. recognition of the People's Republic, I felt that American firmness in Indochina had to demonstrate to the Maoists that

guerrilla warfare could not prevail. Otherwise, the People's Republic might espouse a wholly Maoist foreign policy, that is, dedicate herself to "world-wide liberation through people's [guerrilla] wars."

Moreover, Peking had just exploded its first "atomic device." The prospect of a messianically Maoist China brandishing an increasing nuclear arsenal appeared a threat to the survival of civilization.

If Hanoi were blocked in South Vietnam, I contended, the more cautious moderates would in the long term triumph in Peking, and the threat of a holocaust would recede. After all, Mao believed (as he told Edgar Snow) that a nuclear war would "destroy the world ... but not us."

China, of course, worked out well. Today Peking stands against Soviet expansionism — in good part because what happened in Indochina before 1975 intensified the Sino-Soviet conflict and contributed to the destruction of Mao's strategic doctrine of "the inevitable victory of people's war."

But there was, in 1966, no justification for even guarded optimism regarding South Vietnam's prospects, and there was to be no such basis until mid-1968. My first report from Saigon after four years of absence described the shocking confusion — in both purpose and execution — of the already bloated American establishment, as well as its isolation from the realities of both the villages and the ministries of Vietnam. But Washington had forced its own hand; South Vietnam, defended by the Americans, had become a major piece on the international chessboard. The United States had, I felt, no choice but to remain until the South Vietnamese could effectively defend themselves — or the global balance of power altered radically.

That attitude was not shared by a new corps of foreign correspondents who were newcomers to Asia, though most experienced correspondents agreed. (It did improve my relations with American officialdom, a boon that made me somewhat uneasy.) Having been called a "communist sympathizer" for advocating recognition of "Red China" in the early 1950s, I was attacked as a "journalistic storm-trooper" for arguing that we could not simply disengage from Indochina in the late 1960s. (Reverse McCarthyism? Perhaps.)

The main question persists. Why was the press — whether in favor of official policy at the beginning or vehemently against the war at the end — so superficial and so biased?

Chief among many reasons was, I believe, the politicization of correspondents by the constantly intensifying clamor over Vietnam in Europe and America. Amateur (and professional) propagandists served both sides of the

question, but the champions of Hanoi were spectacularly more effective. They created an atmosphere of high pressure that made it exceedingly difficult to be objective.

Revulsion in Europe and America sprang as much from the nature of the correspondents' reporting as it did from the belligerents' direct manipulation of public opinion. Some of my senior colleagues had learned wisdom on a hundred battlefields, having covered World War II, the Chinese Civil War, the Viet Minh campaign against the French and the Indonesian revolt against the Dutch. I had at least been through Korea, the Malayan "Emergency" and the fighting between Chinese Nationalists and Chinese Communists for Quemoy. But most correspondents had never seen war before their arrival in Indochina. Many confused the beastliness of all war with the particular war in Indochina, which they unthinkingly concluded was unique in human history because it was new to them.

This much must be said: The best of their reporting accurately conveyed the horror of war — all war. Yet it presented the suffering, barbarism and devastation as somehow peculiar to Indochina. It almost made it appear that other wars had been fought by mailed champions on fields remote from human habitation, while in Indochina, for the first time, carnage brutally involved both massed military formations and the civilian populace. Since a guerrilla war is inherently not as destructive as a conventional war, human suffering and material devastation had, in reality, been markedly greater in Korea than in Vietnam — and much, much greater on both Asian and European fronts in WWII.

Because Vietnam did not attract many senior correspondents for extended tours, at any given time a majority of the correspondents were new to the complexities of Indochina. Some could not even look after themselves in combat, the *sine qua non* of a successful — and surviving — war correspondent.

Many newcomers were shocked to find that American and Vietnamese briefing officers did not always tell them the truth even about a minor tactical situation. Despite their pose of professional scepticism, in their naivety they expected those officers to tell not merely the truth, but the *whole* truth. Far from feeling the deep mistrust of officialdom they affected, the newcomers were dismayed by the briefing officers' inability (or unwillingness) to confide in them unreservedly. Older correspondents did not expect candor from briefing officers. They had learned several wars earlier that the interests of the press and the interests of the military did not normally coincide. They also knew that the briefing officers were themselves often uninformed — concerned, perhaps sometimes excessively, for military secrecy — and resentful of correspon-

dents' badgering.

Nevertheless, the candor of U.S. officers astonished experienced correspondents from other nations. Shortly before he was killed in another war, Nicholas Tomalin of *The Sunday Times* reported with amazement the reception given several British correspondents who arrived unannounced at an American airfield. Though he obviously wished them a thousand miles away, the U.S. colonel in command not only made them welcome, but answered all their questions. If it had been a British airfield, Tomalin observed, the group would not have been allowed to land — and if it had landed would have been bustled off within minutes. No supporter of the U.S. endeavor in Indochina, Tomalin marveled at the openness with which the foolish Americans conducted their wars.

Senior U.S. officers did, of course, lie to make a case or extemporized when they did not know the answers. From those practices sprang the bitterness that corroded relations between the press and officialdom. No one likes to be treated as a fool even in the best of causes (and no one thought Indochina was the best of causes). The military were in turn bitter at the unfairness they attributed to correspondents.

Beyond the unremitting drumfire of mutual criticism, two matters rankled particularly: the "Body Count," which for the press notoriously symbolized the military's callousness; and the unavoidably misleading maps delineating the areas under the control of Saigon or the Viet Cong. The military said they released estimates of enemy casualties after each action primarily because correspondents demanded concrete evidence of the progress of a war that was not fought along clearly demarcated battle lines. The officers contended that the maps, which could in no wise accurately depict a hazy, fluid situation, were prepared at the correspondents' request. Officialdom felt there was too much, rather than too little, openness in Vietnam.

Oscillating between excessive candor and bald falsification, U.S. public-relations policies made the press and the authorities not merely adversaries, but enemies.

Esoterica like "enemy intentions," however, did not interest one group of correspondents. They were moved primarily neither by the horror nor the portentousness, but by the thrills of Indochina. They were nicknamed "the war freaks," since they were fascinated by the atmosphere rather than the substance of the war. Cambodia was a favorite resort of theirs. It offered a dangerous little war, abundant opium, marijuana and heroin, as well as the gracious Royale Hotel, French cuisine unspoiled by the American incursions that had ruined Saigon's restaurants. Reflecting the delight of the war freaks, Michael Herr wrote in *Dispatches* that he never

went to bed in Saigon not "stoned," and added: "Vietnam was our substitute for a happy childhood."

One's first war, the veterans could have told him, is usually an extension of — if not necessarily a substitute for — a happy childhood.

Official deceit was thus exacerbated by incompetent journalism. While complaining about the press, many U.S. officials, who knew they were fighting a "media war," sought to manipulate — rather than inform — correspondents. But they were not skilled at manipulation. While complaining about the government's duplicity, many editors assigned correspondents who were not qualified to fill a normal foreign post, much less to thread the labyrinthine complexities of the Indochina War. Some editors told their correspondents what they wanted, while many correspondents had made up their own minds before they arrived "in-country." Only a few, I trust, were in the unhappy position of the correspondent of an aggressively liberal U.S. FM-radio station who, as he confided to me, was told: "Not *every* story has to be anti-war."

Beyond the pressures exerted upon them, most correspondents — serving six-month to two-year tours — were woefully ignorant of the setting of the conflict. Some strove diligently to remedy that crippling deficiency by reading widely and interviewing avidly. Many lacked the time or the inclination to do so — or any real awareness of how crippling their ignorance was to them professionally. Most, as I have noted, knew little about war in general from either experience or study — and less about the theory or practice of guerrilla war. They were untutored not only in the languages, but also in the history, culture, ethnography and economics of Indochina, let alone of China and Asia. Since so many were also untroubled by acquaintance with Marxist theory or practice and were hazy about the international balance of power, they were incapable of covering effectively a conflict involving all those elements.

Not even the "old hands" were necessarily well qualified to cover the conflict — who could have been? — but, considering our divergent backgrounds and political convictions, the old hands' general agreement about the nature of the war was remarkable. Most deplored the ineffectiveness and the corruption of successive South Vietnamese governments, but judged native (i.e., Southern) disaffection incapable of mounting an armed rebellion without direction, reinforcement, and weapons from the North.

Needless to say, even we old hands were not always accurate in our reporting or correct in our judgements. Reacting against the spate of negative reports, I myself tended to emphasize the positive aspects, sometimes excessively. No more than the newcomers were the

old hands immune to irritation at the duplicity of the American establishment, though we were not as dependent upon press officers. That irritation undoubtedly affected our reporting; so did smouldering anger (which sometimes flared into fury) at the Vietnamese, who were always difficult, often unavailable, regularly evasive and routinely deceitful. But the old hands knew they had to live and work with the Vietnamese, and they understood the insecurity that haunted Saigon officials. After generations of colonial rule and internal conflict, no Vietnamese really trusted any other Vietnamese except those within his immediate family (and them neither invariably nor wholly). The newcomers either could not or would not understand what moved the Vietnamese or why they so often seemed to be behaving so badly.

The atmosphere in-country was heavily oppressive, as was our awareness that we were writing for a public that had virtually prejudged the war. My Lai was not reported at the time because the military effectively camouflaged that atrocity. Other allied excesses were reported, while many reverse My Lais were not reported; and Viet Cong atrocities were often discounted. Myth flourished because of the journalists' bias and the contempt they felt for the Vietnamese.

By innuendo and misstatement the

Army of the Republic of Vietnam was reduced in the public eye to a corrupt rabble; far, far, less effective than the Republic of Korea Army during the earlier war. In reality, the ARVN was strikingly more effective, but correspondents were friendly to the ROKA and antagonistic to the ARVN.

Despite their own numerous and grave faults, the South Vietnamese were, first and last, decisively defeated in Washington, New York, London and Paris. Those media defeats made inevitable their subsequent defeat on the battlefield. Indochina was not perhaps the first major conflict to be won by psychological warfare. But it was probably the first to be lost by psychological warfare conducted at such great physical distance from the actual fields of battle — and so far from the peoples whose fate was determined by the outcome of the conflict.

When I drafted this article, I had not intended to dilate upon the possible consequences in the future of the new role of the press in war. Those consequences seemed too obvious. Besides, I did not wish to arouse contention, but to evoke dispassionate consideration.

I felt, moreover, that I had adequately demonstrated that the press acted — and could well again act — as a multiplier of the prejudices of the Western intelligentsia, whose tender conscience moves it to condemn the actions of its own side while condoning related deeds of enemies who are either "immature" or "feel themselves threatened."

Since the article was written, events have denied me the luxury of refraining from underlining the obvious. The predicament I suggested was likely has already become a reality. It is exemplified in El Salvador, about which, I must acknowledge, I know nothing directly, and indirectly no more than any other reasonably diligent reader of the press. Nonetheless, the recrudescence of the Vietnam Syndrome in the media is not merely unmistakable, but distressingly blatant.

"Vietnam" has become not merely an invidious comparison, but a magical incantation. The woolly-minded need only declare vehemently that El Salvador is already — or could become — "another Vietnam" for the enterprise to be condemned and, probably, blighted. Throughout the Western world, commentators and reporters have invoked the spectre of Vietnam to arouse detestation of a Washington initiative.

That rush of the journalistic lemmings includes not only the heavyweights of the media, but many cartoonists and, as well, humorists like Art Buchwald and Russell Baker, whose satire is often striking and effective. Prominent among the lemmings are television personalities like Jon Snow of Britain's ITV, who recently presented one film "report" that continually cut from vaguely delineated

political and military developments to heart-rending scenes in a refugee camp. In that and a drum beat of subsequent "reports" the conclusion was not implied but hammered home time and again: U.S. policy was, presumably by direct intention, rendering tens of thousands homeless and killing hundreds of women and children. El Salvador, the viewer could not but conclude, was a deliberate replication of Vietnam. And "Vietnam" has become synonymous with absolute evil — practiced, of course, by the United States.

The Vietnam Syndrome is compounded of a variety of symptoms, none unique in itself, but unprecedented in combination and devastating in their totality. Wars have been badly reported in the past. Facts have been misstated, and their interpretation has been biased. Emotions have been deliberately inflamed, and reporters have ridden to fame on waves of misrepresentation.

But never before Vietnam had the collective policy of the media — no less stringent term will serve — sought by graphic and unremitting distortion the victory of the enemies of the correspondents' own side. Television coverage was, of course, new in its intensity and repetitiveness; it was crucial in shifting the emphasis from fact to emotion. And television will play the same role in future conflicts — on the Western side, of course. It will not and cannot expose the crimes of an enemy who is too shrewd to allow the cameras free play.

As long as the Vietnam Syndrome afflicts the media, it seems to me that it will be virtually impossible for the West to conduct an effective foreign policy. It is apparently irrelevant that the expectations of paradise after Hanoi's victory evoked by "the critics of the American war" became the purgatory the Indochinese people have suffered. Just as many denizens of the antebellum American South did not know that "*Damnyankee*" was really two words, an entire generation in Europe and the United States behaves as if "the dirty, immoral war in Vietnam" were an irrefutable and inseparable dogma.

Merely equate El Salvador (or any other American intervention) to Vietnam — and not only the American public, but all "liberal" Europeans will condemn it without reservation. That is all they need to know.

In its final effect — what has over the last decade been called "the paralysis of political will" — it will make it especially difficult for the United States to honor any political commitment anywhere in the world where small and threatened nations may expect American support for their independent existence. Before they fall to an aggressor, they will have been victimized by the Vietnam Syndrome.

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Continued from page 17

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The sentence on page 22 of the October '82 issue of SOF beginning, "The American plane had not been charged . . ." should have read: "The American plane had been charged fees to land free medical supplies at an airport built with American tax dollars." The import of this sentence was the irony of the circumstances surrounding an inappropriate delivery of American aid to Southeast Asian communists. SOF apologizes to Brig. Gen. Aderholt for diminishing the effect of that example in his letter to the President and the people of America.

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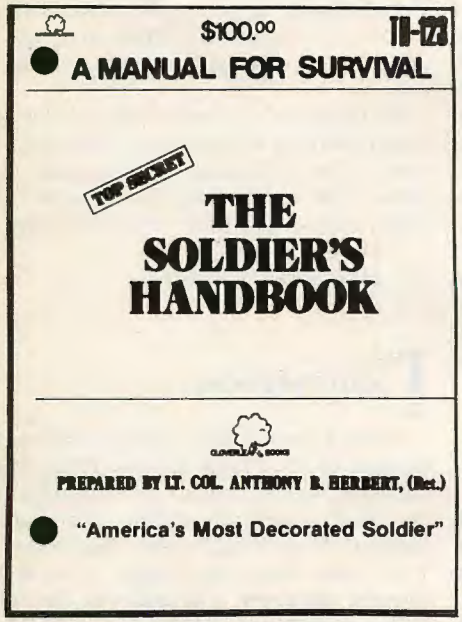

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Buy a bullet, zap a Russian invader. All donations to the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund and the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters Relief Fund can be sent to P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

MARXISTS IN TROUBLE ...

The Mozambique government called for mobilization of the population, city militia volunteers and a return to arms of former FRELIMO (Liberation Front of Mozambique) guerrillas in the heaviest fighting yet against the South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance (MNR). MNR troops raided mines and other installations in-country, and control parts of a major road into Zimbabwe. Mozambique was also shaken by the defection of a key white security official to South Africa, as well as a number of defections of diplomats posted abroad.

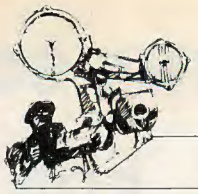
RAPIER ACID TEST ...

"The efficiency is awesome," said a top British official, speaking of the performance of British Aerospace's *Rapier* SAM in the Falklands war. *Rapiers* were in operation within 30 minutes of delivery from ships at San Carlos beachhead. In the first salvoes, a 30-percent kill-rate was achieved (three out of 10 missiles fired hit and destroyed their targets). But the kill-rate quickly rose and stabilized at 80 percent for the remainder of the *Rapier's* deployment in the conflict.

CHILOQUIN FOLLOWS KENNESAW'S EXAMPLE ...

Chiloquin, Ore., has followed the example of Kennesaw, Ga., in passing an ordinance requiring the head of a household to own a handgun. Like the Kennesaw law, it exempts people who hold religious or philosophical objections about such a form of self-defense. Chiloquin Recorder-Treasurer Francis Winter said the community had no intention of trying to enforce the ordinance. "It's just a statement," she said, "that we want the country to know we are for the personal right for people to keep and bear arms."

FREE AFGHANISTAN



FLAK

Continued from page 6

There are gradations of tyranny. The Guardia acted in excess and paid dearly, as did U.S. interests. Simply put, pro-American Caligulas are clear liabilities....

Furthermore, this article proves SOF is mature enough to dispense differing opinions from dedicated professionals.... Wise readers will realize the value of his ideas; reactionary robots will be offended.

Dave T. Hurst
Hawthorne, California

IRA AND FREEDOM ...

Sirs:

I find it strange that my letter has been ignored by the FLAK section. When you come out with an article on the troubles in Northern Ireland ("On Northern Ireland's Front Line," SOF, August '81), I felt that something should be said. I thought, however, I should wait for the letters to start — I was also given a copy in March — and, boy, was I surprised.

You print a letter a from a 15-year-old against the U.D.R., and then an adult soldier (David Walker) answers it. Fine. I, in turn, answer his letter from a more educated and adult viewpoint (also from first-hand experience in Belfast) and have not seen it since. This, to me, is prejudice against the Irish Nationalists. We are here and cannot be ignored.

The IRA is not Soviet-backed. The Soviets even went as far as to *denounce* the Provisional IRA, claiming it was committing "inhuman acts of violence." The body of the IRA split in 1969 because the "Officials" (non-militarist Marxist, now called the Workers' Party) was and is backed by the communists.

You talk of freedom fighters, but you ignore Ireland's 800-year struggle with the oppressive British. They are not nor ever will be welcome in our land. Simple reasons: We want self-determination; we do not want to be ruled from Britain.

The media get their news from the British foreign press offices, and will hear nothing of the plastic and rubber "baton rounds" that killed our women and children. The American public does not hear of the Diplock Courts (no jury or witnesses for the defense) and the pathetic housing in the Nationalist ghetto, yet you tell us of Afghan and Nicaraguan freedom fighters.

The "inhuman acts of violence" that the Russians are so down on are not any different than that of any other war situation. If people wish to say the Provisionals

are backed by the communists, then they may as well mention the arms from America, Britain (yes, I said Britain), Palestinians — the list goes on. When a small army asks for help, it does not care where it comes from, and they did come to America first. It also does not have to embrace the assistant's politics.

You do a good magazine, but if you can't be fair to *both* factions in this war, then do not write of either one. Period.

Jennifer L. Sutherland
Costa Mesa, California

IRA REVISITED ...

Sirs:

As of this writing two bombs have exploded in London, killing and maiming. No one had to wait for the IRA to claim these acts as their "victory." The sound of cowardice boomed and echoed through a city that has bravely endured and outlived many attackers.

These atrocities, like most IRA terrorist activities, are funded by citizens of the United States. Through so-called "freedom funds," the IRA has collected millions of U.S. dollars to purchase arms and explosives to commit acts of terrorism.

I feel that anyone donating money to such a cause is either very stupid, or has no regard for human life. American money will not buy freedom when given to bombers and back-shooters: It can only buy more needless deaths.

I urge my fellow SOF readers, American and foreign, not to donate money to the cause of terrorism in the British Isles.

Bret D. Rivers
Terre Haute, Indiana

SON OF BULLET BATTLE ...

Sirs:

Thank you for the latest controversy on 5.56 vs. 7.62 ("Make Mine MI4," SOF, July '82). It's bound to generate more heat than light.... Weapons and ammunition must be purchased in mass quantities, maintained to a certain minimum and used by many persons with a wide variation in brains. Hence, no weapon can be adequate for all things at all times.... If anybody says he has come up with the perfect combination of rifle and cartridge he is an idealist, an optimist and, probably, a liar.

James Compton
Co B Chemical Schl. Bn.
Ft. McClellan, Alabama

Hackathorn's idea of a "Magnum AK" version of the 7.62mm NATO round is a nightmare. Pity the poor supply clerk who has to order M60 7.62 *and* RDF XM14 ammo. Kokalis' assertion that the 5.56 is okay out to 300m may be true — if there is no wind. When I was stationed in Arizona, one could forget anything beyond 300m, no matter how far one could see.... Give the Army the new

M16, which would be compatible with the new NATO ammunition. Then rename the damned thing. The M16 has had so much bad press that the name itself inspires mistrust.

I realize I don't have the qualifications of Kokalis or Hackathorn, but if people like me didn't buy gun magazines, there wouldn't be any gun writers.

Michael Lindsay
Aston, Pennsylvania

Mr. Hackathorn, if you and I were ever to meet in a fire fight, I would win. You would wind up dead. The rifle, regardless of what else it may be, is a weapon of last resort. Once you register your position with the 7.62, my team leaders will report your location to me — assuming I have not already located it. I'll not risk my squad; I'll just call for fire from my 81mm mortars, fix your position and then sweep it clean.

SSG Jim Pool
Formerly of 101st Airborne
Republic of Vietnam

When you shoot a dude a few times and he don't go down, two things happen: Number one, you have dreams about it every time you drink too much and number two, you go to full auto always, and there goes your ammo, your accuracy and your ass if you get caught with an empty gun (which you will have most of the time on full automatic).... But if you want to quote Newton, do your own figgering instead of cribbing off the class clown. Me and Newt is using .30 cal.

B.J. Hall
Sgt., 1st Plt, E Co,
2nd Bn, 5th Rgt.,
1st Marine Div.

If Kokalis really believes in the aptitude of small-arms technologists, it is likely he would race to embrace the experts from Ford Motor Company who gave us the Edsel and the fiery Pinto, to say nothing of GM's best, the flipping Corvair.

Dick Thomas
Columbia, Missouri

Thank you for printing Peter G. Kokalis' opposing view when and where you did. The Editor's Note by Bill Guthrie was a well-written, factual piece showing the line of thought that led to the adoption of the 5.56mm cartridge. I appreciated them immensely.

As for Hackathorn and his buddy Miller: Neat guys! You got your pictures in SOF, now, get out, you bean-heads. People like them are responsible for the image of deranged, phallic-obsessed "sportsmen" romping through the woods, shooting their guns. Let the pros take care of weapons procurement, and let the writers take care of sport shooting in a responsible manner without the "neato" cammies and wet-dream weapons.

Brian A. Wright
Ft. Belvoir, Virginia

Your editorial in the July '82 issue raises again the continual debate between the advantages and disadvantages of the 5.56 and 7.62mm rounds. Both sides have good reason for supporting their respective choices. However, the editorial content of SOF, I believe, should be biased toward the individual fighting man, rather than the military in general. Your statement that a wounded man requires expensive transport, drugs, facilities and medical personnel is certainly true. But a wounded man can also be deadly. He can still wound or kill our men. If he can do so, then he can tax our men and materiel to care for our wounded. In addition, the United States has not won a war since we adopted the 5.56 cartridge, so in this case, Newton and money have accomplished nothing.

John Michael Berardis, M.D.
New York, New York

I'm no ballistics expert, but I do have a lot of practical experience. Frankly, I think the whole idea of automatic fire is a crock.... An old Marine Raider once told me (and they used to carry "grease guns") that no matter where you are, there is always more air than meat.

James C. Burnham
Formerly Cpl., A Co, 3rd Recon,
U.S.M.C.

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- ☐ **Airborne Qualified (Maroon)**
- ☐ **Ranger Commandos (Black)**
- ☐ **Artillery & Guardian Angels (Red)**
- ☐ **Commando Dress (Camouflage)**

Sizes—6 7/8 to 7¾

(Not sure of head size? Tell us how many inches around your head where you wear your hat. We'll send the right one.)

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☐ **Genuine Leather Chin Strap** $2.00/each

☐ **Acorn Hat Cord** (as shown) $6.00/each

(Specify color: silver, gold metallic, black/gold, metallic, yellow, red or light blue).

☐ Watch Cap, 100% Wool-

This is the genuine GI, tightly knit, and all-wool watch cap. Used by commandos and troops alike, this tightly knit cap fits snug on any size head for maximun warmth on extended cold weather operations. Sides can roll down to protect ears. Choose between dark blue/black (Navy Seal or Marine Recon teams) or OD (olive drab; army) $6.25/each

☐ Camouflage Collection Catalog- featuring genuine military clothing and personal equipment $1.00/each

Free with any order.

☐ US Navy Cold Weather Deck Jackets-

Type A2 - These jackets feature windproof cuff and hip closures plus a full zipper front with button over-closure. The Olive Drab (OD) green shell is 50% cotton/50% nylon. This blend allows the jacket to be water-repellent (not waterproof) while at the same time it has the softness of the natural fibre. It is lined with double face pile in both the body and sleeves.

It sports two hip pockets and a breast pocket with snap closure. The Deck Jacket is cut slightly below the waist so large or tall persons will find it quite comfortable.

XS,S,M,L . . $47.75/each; XL . . $50.75/each; XXL . . $55.75/each

☐ Jungle Fatigues-

Pants feature: 6 pockets (thigh pockets are bellowed); drawstring cuffs; adjustable waist tab. Jackets feature: 4 pockets, bellows style. **Tell us your chest, height, and waist measurements when ordering.** Choose from:

☐ **Camouflage, Woodland Pattern** - 50% cotton/50% nylon. Army's latest issue; the pants have a reinforced seat and knees; the jacket has reinforced elbows. Brand New. **Specify: Jacket or Pants . . . . . $34.00/each; . . . . . $65.00/set.**

☐ **Camouflage, Day Desert Pattern** - 50% cotton/50% nylon. Latest issue to Airborne Troops of the Rapid Deployment Force. Brand New. **Specify: Jacket or Pants $34.00/each; . . . . . $65.00/set.**

☐ **Olive Drab (OD) Green** - 100% cotton, ripstop; as used in early Vietnam. Current GI manufacture, Brand New. **Specify: Jacket or Pants . . . . $29.75/each; $57.00/set.**

☐ **Camouflage, Woodland Pattern Commercial Manufacture** - we've used the genuine military Woodland Camo cloth and fashioned these like the GI Fatigues. We cut some corners to trim the price, but these American made fatigues look just like the genuine ones. Brand New. **Specify: Jacket or Pants . . . . . $26.00/each; $49.00/set.**

☐ Elite Commando T-Shirts

2 color silkscreen (never a rubbery iron-on) on finest quality shirts you'll be pround of. Another Kaufman's Exclusive:

☐ **Special Forces**–grey shirt, (50% cotton/50% polyester) black and white design.

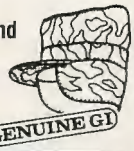
☐ **Airborne/Ranger**–black shirt (100% cotton) red and white design.

☐ **Marine Recon**–red shirt (100% cotton) gold and white design.

Specify size (S,M,L,XL) $7.95/each

☐ **Send for Free Sportswear Brochure With All Our New Designs**

☐ Ranger Combat Cap-Woodland Camouflage - latest Army issue. This winterweight cap features lined flaps which can fold out to keep your ears warm and tuck into the hat when the weather's balmy.



Also available in Olive Drab (OD) Green.

Sizes: 7,7¼,7½,7¾ $9.00/each

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

☐ Angle Head Flashlight This is the heavy duty olive drab plastic flashlight issued to basic and stealth units. The flashlight is waterproof, non-glare and features 4 different lenses which can be easily installed or removed. It can clip onto the belt or suspender for hands free operation; operates on 2 standard D cell batteries and comes complete with a spare bulb. **Brand new, sold in the GI box . . . $6.50/each; 2 for $12.25**

☐ Camouflage Cloth, Woodland Pattern - This genuine military cloth is from a government contract and is the same material currently in use for the camo battle dress fatigues. Twill design of 50% cotton/50% nylon. Price per yard (60" wide)

Genuine GI . . . First 3 yards **$7.00/yard** Each addit. yard **$6.00/yard**

Shipping Costs

Please include appropriate shipping costs from chart below with each order. Amounts shown include costs of postage, packaging, insurance and handling.

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Orders from $20.01 to 35.00	3.75
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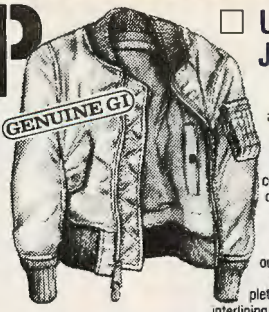
☐ USAF Flight Jacket



These flight jackets are issued to military fliers and are designated Type MA1 for Intermediate Cold. (This means that it is the medium weight jacket, designed for comfort in a temperature zone of about 20 ° to 55 °F). Look for the military designation, sizes and stock numbers inside the left pocket. The outer shell and lining are 100% nylon making the jacket completely wind and waterproof. The interlining is 100% polyester fiberfill for the highest degree of warmth per ounce. This jacket is reversible; outside in your choice of either sage green or blue and the inside is survival orange. It features: two hip pockets outside as well as inside, sewn pen and pencil holders plus zippered easy access storage pocket in the left sleeve. This a snappy, convenient, warm, fully functional jacket and it happens to be the latest fashion trend.

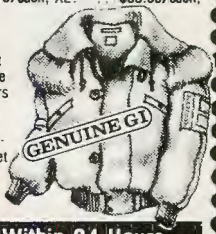
Specify: Sage Green or Blue Shell - Regular Length Only.

Sizes: XS,S,M,L . . . . . $46.75/each; XS. . . $51.50/each

☐ Brand New!! Flight Jackets in Black and Woodland Camouflage - Exact in every detail to the genuine GI MA1 jackets above, manufactured by the same government contractor, to military specs; with reversible orange linings. The Black nylon shelled jackets feature a gold zipper and the Woodland Camo jackets are made from genuine GI cloth of 50% cotton/50% nylon.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, ... $48.75/each; XL $53.50/each;

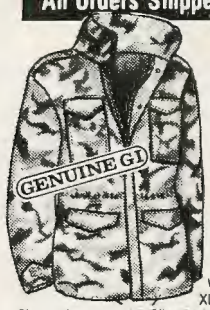
☐ USAF Heavyweight Flight Jacket - Type N2B -



This is the warmest flight jacket that the military issues. It features full pile hood which drapes over the shoulders when not needed. This is the cold weather version of the Intermediate Weight Flight Jacket - Type MA1 featured elsewhere in this ad. This jacket is designed for subfreezing temperatures. Waterproof and Windproof.

S,M,L. **$87.75/each**; XL. **$95.75**

All Orders Shipped Within 24 Hours



☐ M-65 Field Jackets -

This is the basic issue combat jacket. Designed for complete utility, these water repellent and windproof jackets feature: 4 super large utility pockets; gussetted back for complete mobility and freedom of movement; epaulets; adjustable cuffs and collar; drawstring waistband; hidden hood in collar. Brand new, of course.

Sizes are XS, S, M, L, XL. Long lengths are available in Olive Drab (OD) Green and Camouflage, Woodland pattern only.If you're unsure of your size, tell us your chest measurement when ordering. XS-L **$55.00/each;** XL & all long lengths **$60.50/each**

Choose from: ☐ **Olive Drab (OD)** ☐ **Camouflage, Leaf Pattern**

☐ **Camouflage, Woodland Pattern**

☐ **Desert Tan** - (NATO issue). ☐ **Camouflage, Tiger Stripe** -

(Commercially made in a US mill to military specs).

☐ M-65 liner - Genuine GI - designed to quickly and easily button into M-65 Jacket to provide complete warmth by sealing in the body heat. Brand New. XS, S, M. L, . $19.00/each; XL . $20.50/each

☐ Genuine Military Insignia - meeting all military specs

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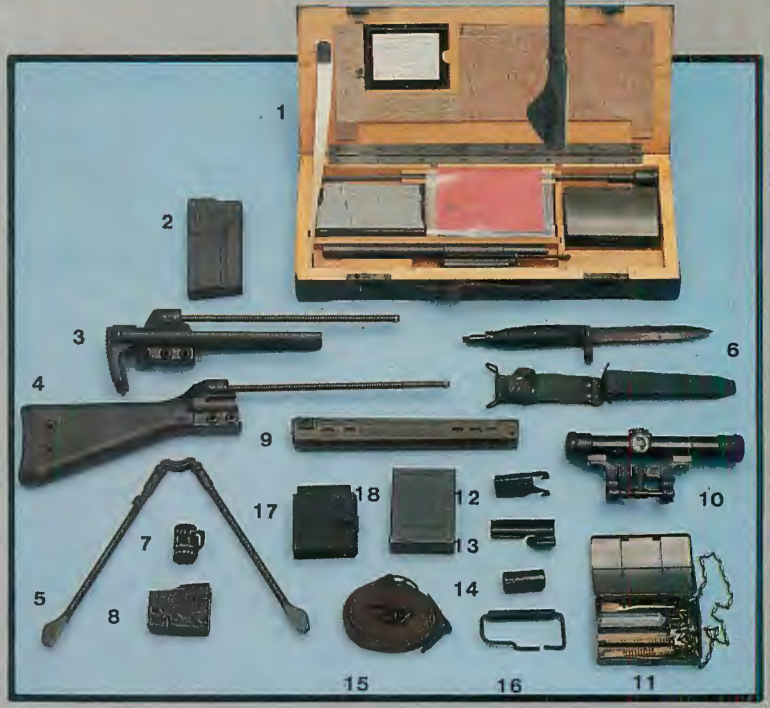

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